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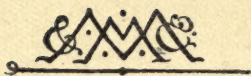
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**COLLEGE ADDRESSES**



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# COLLEGE ADDRESSES

DELIVERED TO PUPILS  
OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

BY

SIR C. HUBERT H. PARRY, BART.

Mus. Doc.

DIRECTOR, 1895-1918

EDITED WITH

A RECOLLECTION OF THE AUTHOR

BY

H. C. COLLES

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED  
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ABOARD "THE WANDERER."

*To face page 1.*

HUBERT PARRY

A RECOLLECTION





## HUBERT PARRY

“THERE is nothing so tiresome as preaching.” The words with which Sir Hubert Parry began one of those addresses, which opened every term’s work at the Royal College of Music during the twenty-four years of his directorship, may fitly stand at the head of a volume having at first sight something of the appearance of a book of lay sermons.

That appearance would have horrified him, for in condemning the tiresomeness of preaching he was sympathising as much with the preacher as with the congregation. He was never wholly happy about these addresses. Though there was the compensation of meeting again a large number of young people, the majority already his devoted friends and the newcomers among them shortly to become so, and of seeing them returning zestfully to the study of the art he loved most, it was always an

effort to begin. He felt the effort to be worth while, because there were certain ideas in which his whole life was so rooted that they had to be said, and as the years passed he spent more and more time on the careful preparation of the address with which he would bring the enthusiasms and energies of his students into focus. He was not anxious to arouse their enthusiasms or their energies. He always assumed them to be there, as indeed they were, brimming over and eagerly meeting his own. But the business of a Director was to direct, and that was what these addresses were designed to do.

I can see him striding into the hall on the first morning of the College term, a carnation from Highnam in his buttonhole, a slip of paper on which a few notes were scribbled in his left hand, and his right hand free to grasp that of any boy or girl who greeted him in its enveloping grip. Sometimes the right hand was used to deliver to some unsuspecting youth that smack on the back which was his favourite token of recognition, and which has made many of us still associate a sharp pain between the shoulder-blades with the glow of the Director's presence.

Boys and girls were alike included in his ample smile, and then he would get on to the platform, tramp about a little, and jerk out a few remarks hurriedly and sometimes inaudibly. Something like this about preaching, or the hope that we had all got over the effects of our Christmas dinners, or his trouble at having to repeat what he had said before, but most often his pleasure at the sight of the good spirits which were a reflection of his own, were his favourite gambits. Their purpose was to get over a moment which was irksome to himself, and which he imagined must be irksome to his boys and girls, the moment of addressing the mind to seriousness.

The picture has a place among the "things that are worth remembering," which he told us to "pile up," insisting that to do so was "the way to make the spirit of a place like the College strong." Other people cannot share the memory, but they can share his mind, and that is the purpose of this volume. For the addresses were not mainly about music, though naturally their subject-matter was illustrated largely by references to the work of pupils and of professors at the R.C.M.

Their purpose was to build up the treasury

of the mind, to suggest ideas for work and comradeship, to inculcate the true aim of education in its widest sense, and to point out the things which in his own favourite phrase "make a fine thing of life." With certain changes of illustration many of these addresses might have been delivered equally well at the Royal College of Science next door, or in the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, or at a workingmen's college, and in almost every one of them there is some word which must be helpful to all concerned in whatever way with the education of themselves or of others.

That is to claim a wide audience, but it is the conviction that such an audience will value them which is the first defence for having adopted the principle of selection in preparing these addresses for publication in book form. The first instinct of those who can remember how, when and where they were spoken is to ask for a complete record of them, to form a chapter in the history of that "College tradition" which was so dear to the Director's heart. Second thoughts, however, will convince them that to do so would be to act clean contrary to that principle of joining hands with others which he was never weary of inculcating.

Year by year the addresses contained appreciative references to the work of the most distinguished scholars and pupils who had completed their courses ; to the deaths and retirements as they occurred of professors and other devoted servants of the College ; there were allusions to local politics, to the events such as concerts and opera performances of the past term and those in prospect for the coming term. Latterly the deaths in action of members of the College who had joined the army for the war, and occasionally congratulation on distinctions won in the field, claimed attention.

All these things belong to the life of the place, and are necessarily intensely interesting to its *alumni*, though they cannot be so to others. For them they are recorded in the pages of the *R.C.M. Magazine*, in which the last ten years of the addresses were first printed. To reproduce them here would be to shut out that wider audience from sharing in Sir Hubert Parry's thoughts merely in order to give to the immediate circle of Royal Collegians a handier chronicle than the volumes of the *R.C.M. Magazine* supply.

Individuals and their affairs were often the

text of his discourses, but they were rarely anything more. It is frequently possible to withhold the text without in the least marring the larger appositeness of his remarks.

Talking of sermons in a parenthesis (Sir Hubert was fond of parentheses) he once said:

“ I cannot help thinking that it might be a great advantage if the preacher informed them (the congregation) that he would not read out the text at the beginning, but would invite them to guess it at the end, and the excitement of guessing it would impel them to improve their acquaintance with the book from which the texts would be selected, while the prospect of a solemn guessing competition would probably make people flock to church in unprecedented numbers.”

Applying the suggestion to this situation Royal Collegians may rediscover the texts of this collection by a combination of memory and guess-work. They may recall for example that the distinction between tradition and convention (one of his dearest themes, to which he continually recurred) was developed in the

essay here published on an occasion when he was faced with "an exceptional misfortune." Having chronicled the achievements of brilliant scholars and students who had finished their time at the College and thus added their names to what in pre-war days he liked to call the "roll of honour," he had to add the painful announcement that "for once in a way we have had to dispense with a gifted scholar in the very first year of his tenure of a scholarship, and to cancel the renewal of a scholarship which had been granted to another." The contrast presented naturally led to the discussion of right and wrong uses of institutions and the opportunities they offer.

Again the two essays on Character delivered at a year's distance from one another were prompted by the deaths of two faithful friends of the College, one Henry Blower, a distinguished professor of singing, the other W. L. Broadbelt, for many years chief of the clerical staff. But these and like cases could not be very illuminating to those who did not know the men of whom he spoke, while his views on the building up and influence of character undoubtedly are illuminating.

Of the last-named case he said :

“ When I hold up Mr. Broadbelt’s career to you as a thing worthy of honour, I am not afraid of seeming to propose to you an example. Your lines of life and work are not likely to be at all similar to his. His career was a quite exceptional one. But the spirit of it which we honour is not a concrete example, but the evidence of a devoted and honourable character which it warms one to think of.”

So the object has been here to take that which came from the warmth of his heart as well as the penetration of his intellect, and through the substance rather than through the figure to let him express himself in the clearest terms to all who have ears to hear.

But if a second line of defence is needed for the selective principle, Sir Hubert himself again supplies it in one of those openings which expresses the difficulty of which he was conscious.

“ I get rather uncomfortable about these addresses. It is quite right and proper to go on encouraging the assembled pupils to have an affection for the College and to



feel proud of it, and to be proud of the share they may have in making it a place fit to be proud of. But it is liable to lose its force and to become wearisome by repetition. The situation is really rather awkward, for there always are a good number of new pupils to whom any one in the Director's position would want to say some essential things which he has said before to other pupils ; and there are some things which he would want to lay stress on which seem capable of being made emphatic only by being put in the same group of words. But if he does say the same things a few times over in the same words, that truthful Magazine comes along and puts the fact right under the eyes of such as can read, and their faith may be sorely shaken by being reminded that they have heard it all before."

What he feared from a magazine reproducing his words at intervals of four months would have been intensified at the sight of a book which laid his repetitions before the reader at a single sitting. The fact that he spoke to a constantly changing audience was sufficient

justification for repetition at the time. A man of less fertile brain and less human sympathy would have crystallised his ideas into a specified course and delivered it to each succeeding generation of pupils.

Such an idea would have been unthinkable to him. The slip of paper in his left hand was scribbled for the one occasion only, and as has been said its thoughts were based on the circumstances of the moment. In the earlier days it too often went into the waste-paper basket as soon as he had packed off his flock to get their time-sheets. Sometimes he would keep it if the notes had been a little fuller than usual, or when they referred to some event of more than ordinary importance, or possibly by mere inadvertence. At any rate it is only by the fact that Miss Emily Daymond, going carefully through his papers after his death, came across notes for early addresses on half-sheets of notepaper, the backs of envelopes, and fragments of music paper, that it has been possible to print here the study of Sir George Grove (his first address as Director), and the tribute to the character and work of Johannes Brahms.

Latterly these fragments were kept to form

the basis of a careful manuscript written out subsequently in his own hand for "that truthful Magazine." But in either case they were never used again. So while it is true that the ideas recur, and sometimes reappear in the same, or almost the same groups of words, both ideas and words frequently take on a fresh complexion from the fresh context to which he found them applicable. To banish completely this sort of repetition would be to lose all view of both the balance and the bias of his mind, and a good deal of it will be found in the pages of this volume. One of the chief difficulties of editing it has been to decide between different presentations of the same theme in addresses of different periods.

He was always pleading for width of view in all work and life, and his insistence on it as the first of the "essential things" is the biggest evidence of his extraordinarily balanced mind.

"The happiest people are those who have the widest outlook. The most successful institution is that which realises its mission in the widest sense, and welcomes whatever is finely done or whatever is

genuinely serviceable to the world, even if it has missed the chance of taking a hand in it."

As a means to the attainment of that width of outlook he urged strongly the importance of pursuing other interests besides the artistic one which brought the students to the College. He was the more insistent on this theme because they were musicians, and the experiences of his own early life had given him a horror of what may be called mere "musicalism."

He spoke even scathingly of this more than once. On the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria he said :

"When I think of the stodginess, the meanness, the back-slumminess of most music of my younger days, the total absence of taste for orchestral music, the pedantic complacency of many representative musicians, the slur which was implied in decent society by the term "musical man"; when I compare this with what we have now—the advance and expansion of young musicians, the splendid orchestral

performances, the widening of taste, the genuine warmth of musical perception—I do feel that there is something singularly happy in the reign of such a Queen as ours has been ; and that it fits the rough English disposition to have such an arrangement.”

Musicians agree that the accession to their ranks of such a man of parts as Parry in the latter half of the Queen’s reign was a powerful lever in changing the status of themselves and their art in public estimation. His direct example was the biggest inspiration, but it was supplemented by his spoken teaching.

His views on the all-round cultivation of the individual are summed up in the essay called “Enjoyments,” but there are many other passages to the same effect, one or two of which may be quoted here, since they set the subject in a rather different light while they enforce the same conclusion.

“ I should be delighted to hear of any scions of the College who had been getting into three figures at cricket matches, or distinguishing themselves at tennis, or showing good pace and stamina in swimming,

or beating the record in cycling, or successfully steering a craft of any sort to victory in home waters, or navigating to more distant shores through the invigorating buffets of the open sea, or otherwise distinguishing themselves in the wholesome activities which are never practised with success without some gifts of head and nerve.

“But don't imagine, because I am an advocate of wholesome activity of bodily exercise and the invigorating influence of friendly emulation in open-air games and sports, that I cast in my lot with the extravagant estimates put upon sport by the world. There is no doubt that the worship of sport is carried to a very excessive pitch in this country, to the injury and depreciation of the higher pursuits of art and literature and the achievements of mind and imagination. . . .

“For all that there is a place for all those healthy activities which are so characteristic of our British race ; it is the curious, persistent love of open air, and of things which are mostly done in the open air, whether on sea or land, that seems to give

a special *cachet* to our nation. If in excess it begets obtuseness and heaviness of spirit, or absence of subtlety and artistic perception, in moderation it begets frankness, open-heartedness ; it keeps us from getting befogged with morbid fancies or being easily misled by trumpery illusions of superstition or charlatanry. It gives us generous fits of impulse which are sometimes interpreted as unscrupulous, hypocritical scheming. But after all it is better to make generous mistakes than to make the ungenerous mistake of constantly thinking and speaking evil of our neighbours through having a bad heart or a faulty digestion."

Here he puts the case for athletics and sport at its highest; more frequently he dwelt on the cultivation of intellectual pursuits. Among the notes for 1898 we find:

" There is nothing better for musicians than to cultivate literary tastes, poetry, history, even philosophy. But to all it is not allotted to have tastes in these directions. Still I recommend you all

to try and read something better than 'penny dreadfuls,' journalese poetry and 'yellow backs.' It gives you a chance of widening your range of enjoyments, and getting into touch with the higher and more enjoyable things of music itself—and of becoming independent and large-sighted artists, instead of copyists and what may be called 'well-pruned practical musicians.' It is better to be a well-pruned practical musician than nothing at all; but a well-pruned practical one is only a half-baked pudding—he has just stopped short of the genuine and complete artist, and misses all that is most vital in the art”;

from which it will be seen that he did not disdain to put his advice in the most elementary form, nor did he find terrors in a mixed metaphor!

Parry preached independence at all times. “It is better to be a rebel than a slave”; and while he stood up for the value of order, he was, it may be hazarded, almost unique as the head of an academic institution, in counselling the students against blind obedience to



orders and the acceptance of rules. He could deal boldly with the delicate question of the relations between teachers and pupils.

“ To attain to complete artisthood you need to roam at large, and taste and see what music is, and not depend only on what your professors tell you. You must indeed thankfully accept their help in pointing out what music consists of ; but you must try and apply it to a wider range than the mere details and particular points the professor deals with. . . . You must not think your professor can do everything for you. It is much better to come to grief, now and then, with a genuine human impulse, than to be always cautiously feeling your way lest somebody should think you a fool for not knowing some silly conventional tradition. . . .

“ In the majority of cases heaven helps them best who help themselves; and it is better to work out your own salvation with a reasonable amount of help than to let other people work it out for you without you putting any effort of your own into the business. The attitude of loyalty and

attention and deference is the best towards your professor, but may be overdone in one respect by taking him to be a sort of Mahomet, and thinking he is all-sufficing. All men, even Beethoven and Shakespeare, have always been human.

“ But it is worse on the other side. Distrust, disloyalty, indifference, carelessness, make the relations between professor and pupil impossible, and render futile all work done. Better dispute everything and be the regular nag of the class than nurse distrust and disloyalty, and pull contrary ways in secret.”

Openness and straight dealing were the very backbone of his message, and with these as postulates he had no fear of the disintegrating effect of differences. Rather he welcomed them as signs of vitality.

“ If you keep your eyes open you will find the same conflict between apparently diametrical opposites in almost everything in life, which has to be accommodated at every step. . . . There are the ardent spirits on the one hand who chafe at the

judgements of experience, and indeed at any restrictions which gall their youthful exuberance, and on the other there is the pernicious pedant who wants to have all human nature regulated into perfect automatism by his stupefying theories. People who have any generosity and breadth of view will always be on the side of the youthful exuberance. But it is even better to try to admit that there may also be some good hidden away beneath the piles of cinders which obscure the intentions of the pundits.

“For in the ultimate the friction between such opposites keeps us alive. It is equivalent to the physical law that friction generates heat, and that heat is a mode of motion, and by no means necessarily a producer of disintegration and disorder.

“We even infer that the conflict of opposites is necessary to life of any sort, and that to eliminate one of them is to induce either stagnation or chaos.”

These extracts, and more particularly the last sentences, will convince the reader of the balance of mind to which allusion has been

made, and at the same time give unmistakable evidence of its bias. The "pernicious pedant" with his "stupefying theories" was certainly no favourite with Parry; all his nature glowed in sympathy with the ardours of "youthful exuberance." I remember him one day stopping a student in the corridor to ask after the progress of a new debating society started among the "boys," and adding, with the eager expectation of an answer in the affirmative, "And do any of you young fellows talk wild?"

Next to the balance the bias was the biggest thing about him, yet it often puzzled people that with so obvious a bias he did not hasten to adopt policies which had for others the attractions of daring enterprise and "up-to-dateness."

But the reason was that above all considerations of policy he was controlled by principle. From the first he had set before him a standard to which he adhered inflexibly. Very early in his career as Director he said:

"We do not want to be a popular institution. We do not want to play down to the public outside who would like to advise us as to what will pay. We do

not want to be told what commodities will bring the quickest returns for the smallest expenditure. We want to train ourselves to make sure of what is really first-rate in every line of art ; to achieve what we undertake not only soundly and correctly but with something of the genuine verve which comes of being really alive and awake in the open sunlight."

For this end he could be infinitely patient. The very suggestion of a short-cut aroused all the intolerant impatience of which his impetuous nature was capable. Needless to say that in this frame of mind he would sometimes reject too hastily a course of action desirable in itself which had happened to be recommended to him by a false argument, the worst being that he and the College should do something because some other individual or institution was doing it. Such a suggestion was simply to show a red rag to a bull. Self-seeking and advertisement called forth his most vehement invective or withering pity.

" Many of the lamentable and bewildering failures of people most richly gifted

come from their incapacity to realise their true relations to the world outside them. Such unfortunate folk as lack a sense of proportion, who are too self-centred and over-eager for their own little prominence, and such as are incapable of generous recognition of others, and see things out of focus when their own interests are concerned, generally fail to make their life's product as a whole equal to their natural outfit. Even when they get what their shallow view of life makes them desire, and their names are noised abroad, it is not much better than ashes and Dead Sea fruit in the end."

It followed that he did not always do justice to the legitimate desire for success and recognition of his more struggling colleagues and pupils. While he believed the workman to be worthy of his hire, circumstances having relieved him from the necessity of exacting it himself, he was apt to misjudge the importance which others were compelled to attach to the "hire." Yet that was only in the moments when his impetuosity got the better of his sober judgement. His was so generous a nature

that he could change and acknowledge himself to have been at fault when he had judged hastily. The conviction from which nothing could stir him was that

“ The thing is to do, not to be said to do; and it is doing rather than the seeming to do which brings a man content at the last.”

His horror of cheaply-earned reputations, of shoddiness and tawdriness in art, was not the selfish one of the luxurious amateur to whom such things are merely distasteful and personally offensive. He remembered that

“ Many people never have a chance of appreciating anything spiritual or even of looking for the pleasures that have any lasting quality in them. . . . It is not so long ago that well-to-do people seem literally to have hated those who lived in squalor and brutality as though it were their own choice. . . . People nowadays are beginning to be aware of and to understand something beyond the narrow range of their own daily lives ; and instead of

hating dirty, low, squalid and feckless people, they are becoming conscious of their own share in society's responsibility to the victims of untoward circumstances, and they try to help in lifting them up."

His own actions constantly attested his consciousness of responsibility in this direction. No one will ever know the number of occasions on which he held out the helping hand to lift. But he saw that in public matters and in art, in which he was more particularly concerned,

"People are hoaxed by shams. . . . They lend themselves to be hoaxed by people whose interest it is to induce them to delight in trash and spurious concoctions, which is not the product of any artistic impulse, but merely the impulse to get plentiful pay or a short-lived popularity."

Such hoaxing made him angry, not for his own sake but for that of others who had not the chance to distinguish the true from the false, and he was always ready to break a lance in their service. But with it went a constant eagerness to extend the most whole-



hearted recognition to fine work, even when it was antipathetic to his own taste. He was not greatly attracted, for example, to the music of the modern French school, and several of his remarks in these pages show that distrust of the French genius which was characteristic of the Victorian Englishman. Yet he procured an early performance of Debussy's string quartet at a College concert, and received a letter from the composer as a result of it which expressed surprise that a work so little calculated to appeal to academic instincts should receive such a welcome at an academic institution. It would have been wholly contrary to his nature to shut his eyes to any new manifestation of art because it was not immediately congenial. The tendency to do so was, he saw, a lingering symptom of that "stodginess, meanness and backslumminess" which he had found to be the canker eating out the heart of English musicianship a generation ago. His clear-sightedness, however, would not allow him to take refuge in the opposite extreme of thoughtless enthusiasm over new things because they were new.

He followed himself his own oft-repeated

counsel of searching diligently for all things good and true. It would be impossible to count the number of times I have found Sir Hubert sitting at the back of some small concert-hall, or lurking in the aisles of some half-empty church, to which he had come because he knew that some little-known work was to be played or a fine performance of a great one given, but to which scarcely another musician in London had thought it worth while to turn out.

There can be little need, however, to draw his character here by personal reminiscence, except in so far as such reminiscence may help to drive home the conviction that his words were the outcome of his life. He spoke from a deep-seated conviction which he had tested practically through life, and it was this fact which sufficiently distinguished his addresses from the type of preaching which he found so tiresome.

Nor were his words only the result of a burning desire to share with others less experienced and less fully equipped than himself the considerations which had guided him through life. He believed in the building up of a corporate spirit for constructive work,

not the forming of coteries and "mutual admiration societies," things which he loathed, but the union of different personalities, making full allowance for their differences, in the pursuit of a common ideal.

"That familiar proverb about too many cooks is only true when people are working at cross-purposes, and get in one another's way. Where efforts are rationally directed the more people pull the faster and surer you go. And there is no reason to be distressed by differences of opinion, even violent differences of opinion, which are generated necessarily and inevitably when any progress is being made. What would really matter would be if there were none."

It was this "rational direction" which he conceived it to be his business as Director to give. Some remarked that for a radical he could be surprisingly autocratic, and indeed his views on "collective wisdom" were strikingly at variance with the doctrinaire utterances of any political party.

"When we go in for collective wisdom

we have to make sure that the conditions are favourable. If we do not we find by experience that we are liable to get the collective reverse of it. Collective wisdom is sometimes what people call slangily "a toss up." So few people have developed a sufficient sense of responsibility to make sure what they do really think, and express it independently in the face of other people; and very few can keep clear of personal feelings which mislead the judgement. . . .

"You know the saying that 'the voice of the people is the voice of God.' It wants expansion. . . . When it is produced in a hurry it is too often the voice from down below. The voice of the people in countries which are in a wholesome state of growth comes right in the end through their being persuaded by the few who keep on thinking till they have found out what is right and true. But it does take time, and people are always observing that the verdicts of one generation are reversed by the next."

He was emphatically one of the few who "keep on thinking," and his persistence and

its persuasiveness went far towards the establishment of that corporate spirit and tradition which was the aim of his directorate.

One more quotation shall be the last before leaving the reader to the perusal of the extended essays which form the substance of this volume. It puts in a nutshell his conclusion as to the attitude of the individual towards a wider social existence.

“Sentiment is a word which makes some people squirm, because the thing itself is so basely parodied and betrayed by those incapable of it. But you cannot have true fellowship without it. By sentiment we mean the appreciation of things which are lovable in our fellow-men—devotion, unselfishness, sincerity and singleness of heart, strenuous effort to do something which is of use to some one without thought of recognition ; and the pathos of heroic mistakes and failures.

“We have sentiment about ancient institutions, about the homes of great men, about the places where we spent our childhood, if we had any luck in such things. . . . It is not after all indispensable that

anything should be of a venerable age to inspire sentiment. It seems conceivable that an institution should be so fortunate as to accumulate lovable features so rapidly as to inspire sentiments of love and affection even in twenty-five years.

“ It depends on the extent to which it shows the finer qualities I have spoken of, and that depends on the individuals who belong to it. If we find the College capable of inspiring such sentiments we have to thank those who went before us, and praise them for what they were and did. And then we may remember with satisfaction that we all can take our share, and even strengthen it for those who are to come after us, by trying our utmost to live up to the standard so happily achieved.”

A word will suffice to explain the arrangement of what follows. Only a rough chronology has been observed, that is to say, the collection begins with the first address delivered by Sir Hubert Parry when he accepted the reins of government from the hands of his predecessor, and ends with the last one, when

he seems to have had an almost prophetic presage of his approaching end.

What lies between these extremes has grouped itself naturally into three divisions. A few addresses, the obvious outcome of events of public or local history, are placed first; then come those delivered in the years before the war, in which he developed most fully the ideas on education for life which he had already adumbrated in earlier addresses quoted from above. Later came the war, changing the view-point of many, and calling forth from Parry himself the confession that he had been wrong in the exalted estimate which he had hitherto placed upon German culture, a confession as honourable as the false estimate had been generous.

The war addresses form a group by themselves, but they are thoroughly in keeping with the tenor of what had preceded them. What he had said at an earlier date about loyalty even to one's enemies he preserved untarnished throughout. The spirit of aggressive selfishness now as ever called forth his severest strictures, but he was incapable of allowing his severity to degenerate into noisy partisanship and abuse.

At the beginning of 1918 he celebrated his seventieth birthday amongst signs of love and affection on the part of the remaining Collegians which delighted and surprised him; but the times were too dark and had weighed too heavily upon him for the festival to be unclouded.

“The days of our age are threescore years and ten; and though men be so strong that they come to fourscore years, yet is their life then but labour and sorrow, so soon passeth it away and we are gone.”

The words seemed to be graven on his memory, so that he could not escape their influence. He alluded to them in his address, and in his replies to the congratulations of friends. That hardly-won cheerfulness of outlook, which made thoughtless people imagine him to be a man of an easy and sanguine temperament, was maintained only by a struggle. It was with difficulty that he could force himself to say, “Yes, I’m seventy, but I’m good for ten years more.”

It was in this mood that the two last addresses were spoken, which here stand by themselves beneath the heading “At the Last.”

. . . . .



It only remains to make acknowledgement (thanks would be misplaced) of what this collection owes to the co-operation of friends. Lady Maude Parry has willingly consented to the publication of her husband's addresses. Not only some of the earlier addresses, but many of the quotations included in the above "Recollection" have been recovered from among Sir Hubert's stray papers by the devoted care of Miss Emily Daymond.

The advice of Mr. Claude Aveling (Registrar of the Royal College of Music and Sir Hubert's co-executor with Lady Maude Parry), and the facilities extended for the use of the files of *The R.C.M. Magazine* by Mr. T. F. Dunhill, its Editor, as well as suggestions made by both as to the treatment of the material they afforded, have been very helpful.

Above all, the collaboration of Mrs. Arthur Ponsonby, Sir Hubert Parry's daughter, in this small effort to preserve and give prominence to some of the things of her father's mind which mattered most to him and to those about him, has been invaluable.

H. C. COLLES.

HINDHEAD, July 1919.



ADDRESSES  
CURRENT EVENTS



SIR GEORGE GROVE, 1894

I CANNOT help being conscious that the strongest feeling which is present in our minds at this moment is the sense of the great loss we have sustained in the absence of our dear old first Director, Sir George Grove. It is the first serious loss our College has sustained, and it is one we shall inevitably feel the results of for a long while. But the energy and ability of our professors and the goodwill and honourable conduct of all you scholars, exhibitioners, and students may carry our College through the crisis; and it is rather as the loss of a personal friend who made a part almost of our daily lives that we shall feel his absence most severely.

There are few of you here present who have not felt the influence of his personality and realised the whole-hearted enthusiasm for whatever is really good which was his most marked characteristic. And we unluckily older

people, who could call him friend even in the days before many of you were born, can recall an even more lively phase of his vital and energetic delight in the best art, and the best literature, and the best music, as well as in the loveliest scenes of landscape or of sea, and even in the joyous impressions of mountain and of forest which rested in his lively imagination. You who have only known him for years can have no such idea of him as we who have known him for tens of years.

It makes me often smile inwardly when I recall the jolly time he and I had together some twenty years ago, when I had the privilege and good fortune to work with him as a sort of sub-editor on his well-known *Dictionary of Music*. We had some uncommonly dreary and tiresome work to do. If you could have seen the state in which some of the articles were sent in you would wonder how they were ever got into shape. I remember we not only had to recast the details of the language of many of them, but to turn the articles inside out and upside down, to put the end at the beginning and the middle at the end, and to cut out whole paragraphs of rigmarole, till we were driven nearly distracted.

But all the while our dear old friend was sandwiching in stories of his many experiences, such as the memories of his boyhood, when he was a clerk in Whitehall, and remembered such ancient incidents as the first appearance of lucifer matches, and hearing and seeing boys in the streets selling bits of stick with sulphur at the end to make it easier to get a light from flint and steel; and at another time he would tell me of his adventures when he was building the first lighthouse in Jamaica, and nearly got killed by tumbling through a hole down the middle of the building; and at another time of the strange and wonderful relics of the ancient work and manners of men which he came across when he was in Palestine as Secretary of the Palestine Exploration Fund; and of the interesting talks he had with exceptionally interesting men like Dean Stanley; and of the thrilling artistic excitements of the time when he went to Vienna with Sir Arthur Sullivan, and found buried under the accumulated dust of years the priceless products of Schubert's genius, which had been hidden in old cupboards all forgotten since the days when the composer had last laid his hand upon

them. And you can imagine yourselves how he was always ready with some humorous quotation from Dickens, or some deep thought from Browning, or some beautiful musical phrase of Tennyson, or some happy and pathetic fragment from an out-of-the-way poet, whose very name we hardly remember.

When did any of us meet with a man so alive to everything that was honourably delightful, whether as beauty of thought, or grace of language, or noble dignity of sentiment, or vivacity of humour? What mind so well stocked or so cosmopolitan? But, alas, all human things are transient in a sense—and in a sense we lose him.

But it is the happy outcome of an honourable life that things that belong to it are not so transient as they seem. It is true we lose the immediate influence of his personality. But the influence of his work may last long beyond the limited vista of the lives even of the youngest of us. For not only the fruits of his actual organisation will still subsist with us, in the system and plan of our College, but the example of his high-minded, whole-hearted devotion may inspire us constantly, not only to develop such talents as we have to the



highest we can, and to put them to the most honourable uses, but also to go forward unflinching, never yielding to the shallow sophisms of a vulgar, greedy, vain, and money-grubbing world, but clinging steadfastly to high ideals; seeking to serve and to help all our fellow-creatures whenever occasion offers, and doing our best to develop our own selves into honourable and refined men and women.

Let our old Director be as it were our patron saint. If we can but live and act as he would have us, truly this College will be an honour to our country, a very beacon set on a hill, and will help to make our art to be held in such honour as has not been paid to it for hundreds of years. . . . I look forward to the day when many of you here present will be winning honours for honourable achievements, and giving the world assurance that the College is a worthy mother of worthy children—a place where all may learn to love what is best and purest and noblest—both in music and in other products of human skill and devotion; so that in the days to come we may all look back to having taken our part in making our College a centre from which light and enlightenment may radiate through all the country.

## JOHANNES BRAHMS, 1897

AN overwhelming loss seems to make a void in the musical world which we cannot hope to see filled in our time. The great heroes of the world are so rare that it is fortunately but seldom in the brief spell of our lives that we have to try and realise what parting with them means. When the career of a great hero ends we stand amazed, and wonder how the immense powers it represented can have really ceased.

When we think of the vital force which the work of a man like Johannes Brahms represents, we can scarcely bring ourselves to face the fact that there will be no more symphonies, quartets, "Schicksalslied," requiems, songs, sonatas, part-songs, nor any other treasures of art marked by the strong and noble individuality of that particularly heroic tone-poet. Not heaven itself, nor all the combined ingenuity of all the cleverest scientists and artists in the

world can ever produce one single work which would represent truly and adequately the noble type of thought and the essentially characteristic qualities in the now familiar works of that single-hearted man.

The life-work is ended, and nothing of quite the same order can again be done in the world. The mortal part of him lies fitly in close proximity to the resting-places of Beethoven and Schubert in the cemetery at Vienna. And what comfort have we? Truly, the comfort of heroic work heroically done—a noble life lived out in untainted devotion to generous ideals. The knowledge that here was a man who formed the most exalted ideals of art, and carried them out unflinchingly; who never coquetted with the mob or the “gallery”; who accepted the exalted responsibilities of knowing what was first-rate, and never belied himself by putting trumpery catch-phrases into his work to tickle the ears of the groundlings and gain a little cheap popularity. And it is something to comfort ourselves with that, notwithstanding the wrath of the Philistine and the ribaldry of the frivolous and the vain, there is still enough wholesome energy left in humanity to give

the highest place in honour and loving reverence to the work of the last of the great German heroes of musical art.

The man Johannes Brahms has gone from us, but his work and his example are our possession still, and will be, not for us only, but for the generations that come after us. The example enforces the pre-eminence of the individual element in art. For, even as it is said that faith without works is dead, so art, without the stamp of a strong personal character, is stillborn. The grandest distinction of specially notable men is that this particular work can be done by no other man whatsoever in the world. A man may utter artistic things with the technique of a superhuman conjuror, and if he have not temperament and character of his own he is become but a spinner of superfluities and a tinkling cackler.

And it is worth remembering that it is in that respect that the English race is so peculiarly deficient. In the intensity and fervour which gives the full nature without stint to the expression of artistic ideals, foreign natures have much better aptitudes. We are too cautious and reticent to abandon ourselves to the full absorption in a musical thought or

expression. We have too much respect for grand and wide principles of organisation to give our individuality full scope.

But here, too, the example of Johannes Brahms is full of encouragement for us. His was no nature always laid open to receive any chance external impression. He was no expansive, neurotic, ecstatic, hysterico-sensitive bundle of sensibilities, but even as full of dignified artistic reserve and deliberate artistic judgement as the most serious of our own people. But he joined with it the great nature, the cultivated comprehensive taste, the imagination fostered and fed by dwelling on noble subjects and keeping far from triviality and conventions. To all, it is open to follow the example—in small things as well as in great. You know how one of the profoundest of men said:

To thine own self be true . . .

Thou canst not then be false to any man.

But it is not only by being true to yourselves that you will be true to one another ; it is, in art, a higher truth that it is only by following the highest native qualities and being true to them that you can ever arrive at a genuine niche of your own in your art. As far as true

happiness is concerned, it will not matter much whether the niche is high or low, so long as it is your own. Every man has some personal characteristics which mark him from his fellows and some lines of endeavour into which they are impelled. And it is by following out these lines and developing these characteristics that a man is happiest and most likely to be of service to his fellow-men. It is when convention and indolence stifle them that men become torpid, bored, useless, insufferable. You must try to see things with your own eyes, not to take even what wise men tell you as so many formulas you have to learn by rote, but to try to see through what look like formulas at first into the principles and truths that they really express. Then you may rise above the mere knowledge of details into the genuine appreciation of great artistic ideas, and be worthy of belonging to the brotherhood of artists of which Brahms was the greatest and most noble member in our time, and feel without false presumption the honourable exaltation of belonging to the same calling as he did.

*May 1897.*

## A QUARTER OF A CENTURY

### THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC

I WON'T waste any time over personal matters, as there are so many things which happen to have special interest to-day in a wide general Collegiate sense. And first of all—it is possibly known to a good many of you that to-day is the 7th of May. But it is probably unknown to most of you that on that same day of the month, May 7, in the year 1883, this same Royal College of ours was definitely and decisively launched on its problematical career by an inaugural ceremony whereat the Prince of Wales, our President as he was until his accession, read a long and excellent address, and declared that the building opposite the West Theatre of the Albert Hall (about the worst ever constructed for any purpose) was open.

So the College has been in existence a quarter of a century to-day. Twenty-five years is a very short space of time compared with epochs of history. But the best measure of time, in one sense, is what has been got out of it, and I doubt whether there are many institutions known to history which have managed to get so much done, and so effectually done, in twenty-five years of their existence.

If I tried even to touch on the more salient individual facts, I should be deferring your lunch into the neighbourhood of tea-time ! And, moreover, though facts are very easy to listen to, they are not so useful as the inferences they carry. Still, one can't help being struck by some that actually glare. Personally, I can't help feeling what grand luck it has been that so many of those who took part in launching the ship are still very much alive and ready for plenty more work for the College, such as Mr. Franklin Taylor,<sup>1</sup> who did a vast lot of the actual preparatory work before the launching. There is our dear Sir Walter Parratt, the most inspiring of teachers, who has radiated life-force and wisdom into young people during the whole twenty-five years ; then there is Sir

<sup>1</sup> Retired, 1916 ; died March 19, 1919.



Charles Stanford, who has led the College forces to brilliant victories times out of number ; Mr. Visetti, whose devotion and enthusiasm have spread his representatives all over the world ; and Sir Frederick Bridge, whose humorous views of counterpoint have made "fifths" so popular. Those five are all that are left of the original Board of Professors—men who bore the burden and heat of the day. Of the other first professors there are still left Mr. Sharpe, Mr. Cliffe, Mr. Barnett,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Kemp,<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gladstone,<sup>3</sup> and Mr. Barrett,<sup>4</sup> and all of them from the first regarded the new institution, not as an opportunity to get self-advertisement, but as a means to do grand, generous, and permanent work.

How great the change in the aspect of musical art has been in those twenty-five years, even the most hostile admit—and only those who have been in the heart of it all are capable of estimating how much of it has been due to the consistent and unwavering policy of our Royal College ; the initiative to which was mainly defined by the enthusiasm of that dear old friend of the old days, whom we all loved

<sup>1</sup> Died November 24, 1916.

<sup>2</sup> Died October 30, 1918.

<sup>3</sup> Now retired.

<sup>4</sup> Now retired.

so dearly, the first Director, Sir George Grove. Most of the substantial work of giving the impetus to the College was done by him and the professors above mentioned, seconded by the first Registrar, George Watson, and the Staff. But nothing could be done till there were plenty of pupils to back up and carry the College message about in the world—and it makes one smile inwardly to think how small the beginnings were.

We began in May 1883 with just 50 open scholars and 44 paying pupils—94 all told—so the entire College of those days would hardly fill a dozen of the rows of chairs in front here. It was a tiny little College—but every one connected with it was keen and full of life, and it soon mounted up. It got to 200 in Easter term 1886 and arrived at 329 in the Summer Term of 1891—that is only eight years—and then it stuck fast for a while. It arrived at 400 in 1898; and there again it stuck fast, the highest numbers so far having been 443.

But we do not want to be a big crowd—we cannot fancy maintaining the particular kind of family feeling we enjoy if we get much more numerous. And it is much more im-

portant to find quality than quantity. When we were quite little we had some of the very finest pupils we ever turned out. Did not we find Dr. Charles Wood, and Dr. Emily Daymond, and Mr. W. H. Squire, Mr. Barton, Mr. Bent, Mr. Inwards, Mr. Kreuz, Mr. Dan Price, Mr. Sutcliffe, and Mr. Waddington in the very first lap of all, in the days when we were but a scanty hundred? And it was the fine standard of character of the earliest pupils which materially helped to establish a great part of the tone which has become characteristic of the place—that atmosphere of singleness of aim and enthusiastic fellowship, among professors as well as pupils, which is almost of more importance than single ability and genius. We cannot help looking back over these twenty-five years with some complacency, when we think of all its output; of the singers who are universally acknowledged to have attained to the highest position in their branch of art, the great number of our organists who hold the highest appointments in cathedrals and important churches, our brilliant fiddlers and viola players, our violoncellists and double bassists, our hosts of composers and pianists,

some of the finest wind instrument players in Europe, and general musicians of mark, and even dancers and elocutionists.

But we cannot limit our retrospect to pupils, but are impelled to think also of our doings—of the vast number of first-rate concerts we have given, the number of performances of important new works, the many performances of almost unknown operas, as well as distinguished performances of well-known ones; our loyal culture of *ensemble* music, and the influence which such loyalty, in connection especially with instrumental music, has had upon the taste of the country. It has all been done by unstinted co-operation,—by zeal begotten of sympathetic enthusiasm. And one of the happiest manifestations of this feature in our College life is the College Union<sup>1</sup>—which is the outward and visible sign of a very delightful inward and spiritual grace—which, as I have said before, found its initiative among the pupils themselves, and spreads and gains in vitality by the feelings of good fellowship born of mutual respect.

One hears that even cannibals and gangs

<sup>1</sup> Founded in 1905, a society of past and present members of the R.C.M.

of burglars and the men who prey on their fellow-men in money markets have their implied codes of honour so called, which even torture could hardly make them violate. The College has its tradition, and most of those who belong to it know—as well as a cannibal knows what is expected of a well-constituted cannibal—what is expected of a Royal Collegian; and would sooner starve and be relegated to a workhouse than fall short of it.

That is one of the good reasons for looking back on what has been done; no one but a wretched, rotten degenerate would look back on achievements as an excuse for taking it easy and letting things slide. People who have any generosity of disposition can only regard the well-doing of their predecessors as an incitement to emulation. We may well say that it will be hard to do better than the College has done—but you never know what you can do till you try. When we point with pride to the achievements of earlier College heroes, it would be absurd and feeble of you of the present to take a back seat. The true principle is to praise the men of earlier days without stint, and thereby set the standard for yourselves. The rivalry will not be only between those

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of the present day, between College and Academy, College and Gewandhaus and Conservatoire, but between College of the past and College of the present. And to judge by your present appearance you will be quite worthy of the incitement of such honourable rivalry.

A last word and a familiar one : Remember that nothing is so important as the formulation, within the bounds of College decorum, of your own personality. We must be ever expanding, and without thinking whether we get any thanks for it, ever doing something to make life worth living.

*May 1908.*

## KING EDWARD VII.

(FOUNDER OF THE R.C.M.)

WE always meet on these occasions in a very joyful mood, and no one is more glad of it than I am. But for once I feel bound to harden my heart and ask for a spell of seriousness, as we have a tribute to pay which we cannot ignore.

A change has come in the circumstances of the College since we met at the beginning of last term such as has never happened since the College came into existence, and cannot happen again. We have lost our best and most loyal and most powerful friend. The King, who was the inventor and Founder of the College in days before most of you were born, was so true and liberal and large-hearted in his goodwill to the College that our circumstances can never be quite the same now he is gone from us. However gladly we may appreciate the

proofs which his successor has already given of his sense of the responsibilities and opportunities of his great position, of his readiness to encourage and support work that is being worthily done, and his unselfish readiness to help forward anything which is for the good of his people, we must face the fact that the peculiarly personal interest which Edward VII. took in its foundation cannot be expected to find a counterpart in the time to come.

We have enjoyed conditions which have been quite exceptionally favourable for the first quarter of a century of the College's existence, and we may gladly admit that it has helped us beyond computation; and now we must be prepared to depend more upon our own energies and resources. It is fortunate for us that we have got such good foundations to start from, and it is as well that we should realise how much of the solidity of those foundations we owe to the wisdom and discernment of the true friend we have lost. No institution ever had occasion to hold its Founder in more loving remembrance. The extent to which we owe our existence to him would hardly be believed if we had not the undoubted facts to prove it. You can read



for yourselves, in the excellent article by Dr. Shinn in this term's Magazine, how strenuously he worked and how successfully; and the liberality of mind he showed when he had started the College on its career was as remarkable as his energy in getting it founded.

For one of the most remarkable things in the late King's attitude towards the College was the extent to which he left us free and independent to work out our own salvation. With any one less clear-minded one would have expected a great deal of superfluous guidance; and even an occasional manifestation of a disposition to extract personal pleasure from the product of his own energy. It is not so long ago that such an institution would have been regarded by people at Court as a convenient means of providing for dependants, favourites, and importunate schemers. But times have changed, and though no doubt the importunate folk were not absent, appointments have always been made at the College on the basis of tried ability and worth, and not on mere personal favour.

The King knew quite well how coddling can ruin man, woman, or institution, and he knew that it was better for us to find

out our own way than to have it made too easy for us. So far from resenting any independence from his views, he once expressly said, in discussing an important matter in the arrangements of the College, that he always meant to act as a constitutional President, and not to insist upon his private views if the views of those who ventured to differ from him proved to be substantially grounded. And the result has been that we have thriven much better than if we had been coddled. We developed as the nation developed, by feeling that there was plenty of room for our independent activities. There is a thing also that I should like to underline in the King's Speech at the opening of the College, because it is such an extraordinary proof of wide-mindedness coming from such a quarter as long ago as May 7, 1883. The President Prince then said :

“ The establishment of an Institution such as I open to-day is not the mere creation of a new Musical Society. The time has come when class can no longer stand aloof from class ; and that man does his duty best who works most earnestly in bridging over the gulf between different classes which it is the tendency

of increased wealth and increased civilisation to widen. I claim for music the merit that it has a voice that speaks, in different tones perhaps, but with equal force to the cultivated and the ignorant, to the peer and the peasant. I claim for music a variety of expression which belongs to no other art, and therefore adapts it more than any other art to produce that union of feeling which I much desire to promote."

It is one of the most delightful things about music that it brings all sorts and conditions of men and women together upon equal terms, and obliterates the tiresome barriers of Class. Its equalising power has been constantly shown at the College. If a scion of the aristocracy plays a violin in the orchestra and is not specially distinguished as a performer, he or she does not lead the orchestra by right of social position, but takes his or her place at a back desk which represents his or her actual standard of artistic efficiency, and contentedly submits to be led by any one of whatever rank who plays the violin well enough. No one would ever think of enquiring whether the leader of the orchestra was nobly born, or the son of an artisan or bank

clerk. The only thing that matters is whether the individual is artistically fit to lead. And it is the same in all the other departments of musical activity. The singer rises to a prominent position at the College because she can sing, not because her father might be able to flatter her vanity with dazzling diamonds; and the pianist who has all the advantages of conventional social position drops them when she comes into contact with superior talent. The mere chance of so-called advantages of birth counts for nothing at all. The foresight of our Founder has been abundantly verified, and it is the more pleasing to think of it because the verification has been purely spontaneous; inasmuch as it is unlikely that any one was aware of his having uttered the sincere and pregnant words which might have given us the cue. But now that we know them we may gladly take them as one of our College mottoes.

The immediate future will put us to the test, and there is no denying that we have arrived at a notable moment in the history of the College. So far we have been frequently encouraged by the well-grounded belief that what we have done justified the hopes of our

Founder. He often expressed, in the days when he was President and since, his satisfaction at the work his College was doing and the position it had attained in the world ; and now we can look no longer for that kindly encouragement. But it would be paltry if we thought our debt was paid. If we owed it to him to justify his Foundation while we could still win acknowledgement and recognition, it will be still more to the purpose if we can go on justifying it now he is gone from us. Every man, whether he be king or ordinary mortal, longs for his work to bear good fruit after he is gone. We can all of us in our several ways minister to that end, and take a pride in repaying our debt to his memory by maintaining a standard of character and a constancy in well-doing, which shall give to his Foundation a unique position among institutions of like character throughout the world.

It would not be right to ignore the fact that the loss of our Founder inevitably carried with it the loss of our President ; as the King of this country cannot by law be a President of such an institution as the College. And the loss is also a very serious one to us. During the too short time that the College had the

present King for its President it was in clover. A President more completely free from the obstructiveness of punctilio or etiquette, or fussiness or meddlesomeness, it would be difficult to imagine. The tradition of kindly consideration descended from father to son. Whenever officials of the College had to deal immediately with him, his frankness and open-mindedness and naturalness gave a comfortable feeling of reliance ; a sense that the President approved what was well done, and indeed actually cared that things should be well done. That kindly support we shall now miss, as the position of Patron, which the King has so kindly consented to accept, is not so intimate in its relations with the College as that of President. But his being Patron guarantees his continued interest in the College, and his attitude towards it in the past makes us confident that his help and furtherance would be forthcoming if ever the College were in need of it in the future.

It is almost inevitable that we should now also lose touch with some of those who gave the College the support at least of their distinguished names, in view of its connection with the Founder, or for official reasons. If

ever by chance any of you look at the page at the beginning of our Syllabus, you are no doubt uplifted by the imposing list of peers and important public men whose names figure on the Council and Committees ; and, no doubt, you think they all devote themselves night and day to help the College to maintain a position worthy of its Founder. It is probably very fortunate that they do not. As a matter of fact it is a small group of devoted, loyal, and energetic friends who do all the important work that is required of the Executive and Finance Committees, and among those loyal friends there is no one to whom we are more indebted than to our new President, Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein. He began working for the College before it came into existence, and his support and helpfulness have never faltered or diminished through the quarter of a century and more which has elapsed since. We have every reason to welcome the King's approval of his occupying the position for which he has shown such eminent fitness, and we can feel that under his Presidency we will show our mettle as vigorously as under his predecessors.

I have begged you to take on a serious mood

for a while, and I know the reason approves itself to you. But there is no need that it should stand in the way of the good spirits which fit your coming back to work again. Our Founder would not at all approve of our suppressing good spirits on his account. He, of all men, was of a mind to approve a cheerful humour, and knew what a splendid help it is to getting work done. You cannot pay a much better compliment to his memory than to continue to enjoy your College life and its good fellowship as of old. A serious experience can be a very serviceable thing. It gives a man a distaste for things trivial and frivolous, and helps him to distinguish between things that are really enjoyable, even in times of seriousness, and the silly, roystering, unprofitable foolishness which betokens semi-idiocy. People who are capable of being serious enjoy life much more than those who are not, as you may judge from the profound boredom which often afflicts most of those who try to spend their lives in amusing themselves.

The man gets the most out of life whose nature is capable of taking in the widest range of experiences. We of the College have had a new experience—one that we would rather



not have had. But thanks to our lost Founder, we still have the College, and it will be quite in accordance with his views that we should enjoy what the College provides for us to do with all our might. The more we enjoy it, the better will be the fruit of our energy ; and the better will be the fruit of the work of the Founder.

*September 1910.*

## A LOYAL RIVAL, THE R.A.M.

JUST at the moment I should like to get away from the College and its aims, and to think for a while of another Institution which probably enjoys similar advantages; as one of the things which appeals to me most to-day is the attainment by our amiable rival, the Royal Academy of Music, of fine and commodious new quarters.

Perhaps you may be a little surprised at my devoting attention to a place to which you do not belong, but I think it is a good occasion to say something of its virtues. It is right and proper that you should appreciate thoroughly the loyalty and fairness which has characterised the behaviour of that Institution toward us from the first. One must admit that at the beginning of our existence the appearance of a rival on the scene, supported conspicuously by favour in the highest quarters, could

hardly be otherwise than a considerable trial to an ancient institution which had thriven and begotten numbers of very distinguished and brilliant musicians since coming into existence early in the nineteenth century.

The College must have looked like a young and aggressive upstart and the claims that were made for it, and the hopes that were expressed about it, were liable to be uncomfortable and distasteful to supporters of the old-established house. But they never showed any ill-will or soreness against us. They maintained a perfectly dignified and sympathetic demeanour, and even before long condescended to combine with us in that invaluable scheme for providing people with something definite to work for, and diffusing opportunities of becoming acquainted with first-rate music, which is now well known throughout the Empire as the "Associated Board."

Ungainly as its name is, that association deserves recognition for having something even poetic in its aims; and one of the most admirable features of its history was the readiness of the older Institution to associate itself with the younger on equal terms. The foundation of the Board was most happy in affording personal

contact between members of the two Institutions, as personal contact is such a safeguard against misunderstandings.

It is when people do not know one another that they get into the way of attributing mean and unworthy motives to the actions of rivals. The essence of our relation with the Academy is friendly rivalry. The rivalry is in itself quite invaluable because it keeps us both up to the mark. But if it had been mere rivalry, without opportunities of personal contact, one can imagine the air being poisoned by suspicions and rumours and perverse misrepresentations such as attend party rivalries of all sorts.

As it is, the Academy professors come to us; and our professors go to them, and they meet constantly as personal friends, and our respective efforts to outpace one another tend only to the general advantage of music in this country. It would have been quite natural for them to give themselves haughty airs and to look down upon us as juvenile pretenders, and so to set things going in a wrong direction. But they did not; and the result is warm regard and mutual recognition, and the great part of the credit seems to be due to the Academy.

There can be nothing better for us than to return to them full measure of loyal appreciation. For that is a kind of loyalty that cannot do harm to any one but rather does good all round. It may even do good to consider a little what loyalty means and how thoughtless and hazy ways of regarding it may make mischief. People are so fascinated with the idea of it that it seems a kind of sacrilege to inquire into it at all. But all things are better for being inquired into, even virtues and so-called moral principles. From the personal point of view we take it as a matter of course that a man must be loyal to his friends and his family and the people he mixes with. But in the far back of our minds it is well to remember that being blindly loyal to a friend because he is a friend, or to one's party because it is one's party, without considering whether they are in the right or not is a kind of egotism upside down, and means being disloyal to any enemy just because he is an enemy and does not belong to us. It is quite sure to entail wrong and injustice somewhere.

The highest ideal of loyalty should be able to embrace enemies and rivals and competitors as well as friends. If a friend is manifestly

in the wrong, there are better ways of being loyal than stubbornly insisting that he is not. It would be of much more service to him as well as to the world to make him see that he is wrong and try to put himself and every one else right. Blindly refusing to admit that he is in the wrong is only encouraging him to go wrong again. That sort of romantic loyalty which merely ignores the rights and wrongs of a position is disloyalty to every one who is in the right. It is only a romantic and fanciful way of being dishonest.

Loyalty to principle is a thing which covers all sorts of relations with people and things. There is a right way of being loyal to your friends and your family and your clan, to people of like occupations and opinions with yourself, to your College and your country, to your rivals and competitors and to your enemies (or people you think are your enemies), and even to the people you believe to be vicious and spiteful, and to all sorts and conditions of men!

On the whole, there is something even more chivalrous and fine about loyalty to an enemy and a rival than to people who merely engage our personal interest and regard. Such

loyalty means readiness to admit and welcome whatever is well and honestly done, wherever we come across it, especially in rivals and adversaries if we have any.

It is very natural and easy to belittle the successes and abilities of rivals and competitors; and nowadays commercialism has so infected the atmosphere that people seem very often to lose the sense of what is due to facts, and only observe that when some one else has got something which is in competition with something that they have got themselves they must do everything to discredit the rival product, for fear their own should get left on their hands.

Commerce seems to find it necessary to disparage everything in which men are not personally interested, and to look for every flaw in a competitor's work and make it look as big as possible: to keep other people's products out of the way by any means available, even by tariff walls, and to throw everything in which they are personally interested at the heads of the public, and make the world hideous with their aggressive advertisements. And the commercial attitude of mind must be confessed to have got into artistic circles, and introduces

a new and disagreeable type of mere business loyalty which we could very well and profitably dispense with. It is not really loyalty at all but a keen eye for business and profits.

What is suitable for commercial purposes is certainly not suitable for art. People who are engaged in art do much better by adopting the more chivalrous attitude of looking for what is good in other people's work. In the first place, if a man has a rival it must be more inspiring for him to have a rival worthy of his steel than one whom he despises; and art differs from commerce in making it quite legitimate to learn from a rival and borrow his best strokes. In fact when a man finds his best strokes and ideas annexed by some one else it is generally considered that he ought to like it.

All great masters in every branch of art have always learnt from one another; and the progress of art consists in the discoveries and achievements of an infinite variety of different minds, all contributing according to their capacities to the general good, solving problems of technique, discovering new ways of interpreting more profitably the intentions of composers, finding out new ways to enable audiences to be



interested in and understand what they hear, enhancing the methods of art all round and making it richer.

But I am also aware that all this is not entirely applicable to you. It is when people get older that the temptations to be ungenerous to rivals and to adopt the injurious form of what they would complacently misdescribe as loyalty are more prevalent. Young people are rather disposed to be eagerly omnivorous, and to welcome everything that gives them new experiences and new sensations; and naturally they do not have great capacities of discrimination. They are easily led to adopt a party, and to take sides, and to think poorly of any institution which seems in rivalry with the one they belong to. It is to be hoped that we are safe from top to bottom from having any such mere party feeling towards the Academy; and that we are loyally able to recognise and admit its fine qualities and its fine achievements. Its members at all events are rivals worthy of our steel, and we shall do well to keep a sharp look-out and take wrinkles from them whenever they do something better than we do.

Apart from any reference to the Academy, it would be well to caution you from thinking

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I only recommend you to look for good in everything. That would not do at all. As the world grows older, there are more varieties of bad in it as well as more of good, and more chance of going wrong if you do not keep your eyes open. When a thing is plainly bad, mean, common, and stupid, it is a great pity that personal interest, specious advertisement, or whimsical fashion should induce people to think it is good, in spite of their being able to judge that it is not. It is not so difficult as it seems to distinguish what is good from what is bad. Many of the difficulties arise from personal interests, mistaken views of loyalty, what we may call side issues. People find fault more than they praise because it is easier and more amusing, and they often praise what is not good because it is their interest to do so.

We are bewildered by the hosts of conflicting voices, one saying a thing is good, and another saying it is rubbish. We are bewildered by the haste with which we have to make up our minds about things in this short spell of life which we have got to make the most of; by the craft of the clever ones who have to present stale things in new aspects and twaddle as deep thought; even by the necessities of journalists,

who, poor things, have to provide copy of some sort even when their heads are as empty as bladders and possibly aching. Yet the good survives. In spite of ephemeral distractions, sooner or later men sift out the mistakes and misrepresentations, and get at the genuine things and hold on to them. How else would the finest things in our art survive? The majority of people always hate any art which has any quality about it at first, but they are brought round by degrees by the firmness of the few people who have some understanding, and by the lasting qualities in the things themselves.

Most of you know through your own experiences how you can come back to some things again and again; things which really are genuine and come from the sincerity and generosity of a man's heart. You may be attracted for a time by little artificial trifles which chime with passing inclinations. But if they are too slight, too limited, too devoid of things which appeal to more than passing inclination, they lose their hold on you, and you forget them even gladly. It is the same with books and poems and plays, and with everything we occupy or amuse ourselves with, even our games.

The things which have many sides to them, that interest us in all sorts of fresh ways, that can satisfy even the instinct for change, appeal to more than mere chance moods and keep us ; and to them we return again and again, however many may be the interludes which our inevitable human vagaries impose. If we look and think, we find it is either because we are constantly finding out new sides in the finest things or because we can see them in all manner of different connections and surroundings and from all sorts of points of view, and in various frames of mind or feeling, without their losing their hold upon us.

Art does not differ from the ordinary circumstances of life in such respects. All through the history of all sorts of races in all ranks and in all ages, people have been able ultimately to recognise in their fellow-men the things that permanently stir them to love and admiration. Whether we go back as far as Homer, or as wide as the primitive stories of primitive people, such as the Sagas of the North, the same traits of humanity stir mankind : such as generosity, courage, firmness, devotion, unworldliness, sincerity, things which are not trivial and small and petty. Every-

body who has ever written plays, books, poems, or stories has always gone to work with the assumption that he could make his readers or hearers love certain characters and loathe others ; because at bottom men are all agreed upon the things that excite admiration or detestation.

Most people would like to do the things that win appreciation, but their lack of control of less honourable impulses betrays them ; and when they yield more and more to those impulses, they lose the faculty of doing what in their saner moments they knew it would be more honourable and profitable to do. And then sometimes they take up with the cynics who try to confuse things, and make themselves believe that doing low and mean things is necessary, because so many people are reported to do them, and to get on better in consequence. People who try to persuade the world that low and mean actions are profitable are about the most noisome and mischievous criminals that can be found ; infinitely worse than the unfortunates who are hanged or sent to long periods of penal servitude for sudden explosions of passion. But the happy thing is that humanity is not more

corrupted by such "advocates of the devil." Down below in the innermost of them, men keep firm hold of their appreciation of really fine qualities of character and art, such as are not merely kept for show or profit and which thrive in a great many more people than would be readily admitted, even sometimes in the very rottenest specimens of humanity. And one of the most interesting and profitable occupations in life is to look for fine qualities wherever they may be found, in art and poetry and in friends and relations, as well as in rivals and competitors; and also to find out what it feels like to grow a few of them oneself.

*September 1911.*

EDUCATION FOR LIFE





## THE BEAUTY OF ORDER

THERE'S nothing so tiresome as preaching. But I find that last term I advised, in the recklessness of the moment, rebellion rather than slavery. So perhaps it will be better this time to qualify it a little, and I had better say something of the beauty of order.

I daresay most of you do not care much about orderliness—it sounds so smug; you are too young, and the indulgence of impulses is infinitely more to your taste. But you will find, if ever you arrive at years of discretion (which is, of course, doubtful!), that there are two sides to every question. There is nothing more essential in the pursuit of art than impulse, except order.

The beauty of order is that there is so much more room for things. If you have twenty letters by post of a morning, and open them, and throw them all down helter-skelter on the

table, they look perfectly awful—it looks as if it would be best to put them in the waste-paper basket at once, and not try to answer them. But if you put them in a few piles, in accordance with the nature of their contents, they look ever so much smaller, and you don't despair of answering them all. Now one of the first objects of life is to get as much into it as you can. When you get old enough to look back a little, you will get a bit worried not to have done some things that were worth doing, and it is always well to remember we each have a little spell to get things done, and we do not get the chance to get them done again. The older you get, the shorter you will find your one chance ; and the only way to pack life as full as it will hold is to put its contents into some sort of order. But there is no order that does for every one, and every one has to find the order that suits his disposition best—and that is where the room comes for your impulses and queernesses.

No one is good for much who has not something different about him from other people, and who does not make the best of the chances life affords him. The best that any man does he must do for himself. The best

masters in the world can only show you how to use your own aptitudes—they can stuff you as full of learning as a human animal can hold, but if you cannot use it, you are no better off than a cook with a larder full of raw materials, who cannot even make a suet pudding. That is why I preach rebellion. It is no use only doing what you are told—I would much rather you did what you were told not, than go on repeating what people tell you like a paltry parrot.

But you can even do what you are told not to do in an orderly manner. It is getting square things mixed up with round things, and long things all at angles with one another that does the mischief—they all get in one another's way. It resolves itself, somehow, into the familiar saying, whatever you find to do, do it with all your might. And even that wants qualifying—for it is as well before you try to do anything with all your might, to make sure it is worth doing at all. Most of you have made up your mind that one thing is worth doing, and that is developing your musical abilities; and having so made up your mind saves a lot of trouble. You have no need to go fooling around like unfortunate young

members of the over-prosperous class, not quite sure whether it is best to loaf round to see what somebody else is doing, or whether you had better go out and kill something, or whether you will go to a race meeting, or go and play golf, or smoke a cigarette, or do something else—read a magazine, or practise diablo, or call on your tailor. At least you have got something definite to do, and the better you do it the happier you are. And you know quite well that if you want to do it well you have got to get some sort of order into your ways of doing it. Of course you are helped here, to a certain extent, by the way your lessons are regularly timed, so that the ground plan of general order is already plotted out for you; and the way people come up to time at the College is, taking it all round, very wholesome.

But the other kind of order—the order that is in your own hands—is difficult; getting things so spaced out that they do not get in one another's way. Some people, when they find something that gives them trouble, have not backbone enough to stick to it, and go slithering off to something else; and once begun, the process of letting things slide goes

on getting worse and worse ; and, when they arrive at years which are called those of discretion, they find they have just been doing nothing, and that life has become a jumble, and they begin to hope that Heaven will make up for the muddle they have made of their chances on earth.

Now you would like me to tell you how to get order into the things you want to do, and I can't. No doubt you think you are all alike, but you are not, and I would much rather you were not. You have got to find out for yourselves ; what applies to you does not apply to another. If I were to say, "You can't play the piano well enough to play to any one unless you practise your scales," most of you would say, "*We do—we do*"; and then I should have to remember that many of you play Beethoven and Mozart, and Brahms and Schumann, and even Bach, just as you play your scales—and I should be sorry I spoke.

The fact is that the dear good people who play their scales and their exercises are just those who by temperament and feeling will find it most difficult to play anything else ; while those who feel music deeply, and are passionately eager to get to the works they can enjoy,

have not the patience to develop their technique. If I say, "Go and do what your masters tell you," you might say you always do, and then I should have to remember that that is just the way to get stupid. You have got to understand what your master tells you to do, in order to do it your own way. If you do not do it your own way, you must be doing it like some one else, and then it is little better than making things by machinery. You have got to find out, each one, what is the best way to do things with the particular qualities you have got, and order things accordingly.

Every man's order must be his own order in the end, and there are three simple things to keep in mind: first, that what he does is worth doing; secondly, that when he is doing it he does it with all his might, and does not let vagrant impulses distract him and have one thing getting in the way of another; and thirdly, that it is of use to some one else besides himself.

Of course, while you are very young, it is useful to be saved all the bother of thinking by having your work cut out for you, and not having to worry about the object of what you do; and there the College spirit comes in.

Where everybody has the feeling that what he does is a credit to the College, the inspiration of local patriotism is a fine spur—and then there is competition and examination, and pleasing your pastors and pastresses; all of which is helpful. But, unfortunately, we are not all so very young, and some are old enough to think; and when you are old enough to think, you are also old enough to think wrong. And the way not to think wrong is to think in some sort of order; a confused state of wild incoherent impulses only leaves you sitting in a quagmire. All the same, it is better to think wrong than not to think at all—if you think wrong hard enough, you will most likely fall over something, and then you'll find it out, and if you have got any sense, you'll see you have been thinking wrong, and try another line.

You know the delightful saying that people who make no mistakes make nothing—we are not likely to forget that there are such things as fatal mistakes. But the spirit of a place like the College will prevent College people making these sorts of mistakes. The mistakes College people may make are those which show a lot of spirit and energy, and they just serve to let

them know when they have broken their shins over something, and had better try another way of going. When you are in the humour to think a bit, you will find a sort of universal order—you cannot attain any good thing without keeping your eye on its opposite. Every good thing has in itself the roots of badness and barrenness; too much order merely results in mechanical lifelessness.

As I have said before, it is essential in art for human beings to express themselves—to see things for themselves—to present their art or their thoughts to their fellow-men in terms of their own personalities. But if, while you are trying to think for yourselves, you do not keep your eye on what other people are thinking, and what is due to a place like the College, you will get steering wild, and there will be a smash-up. Similarly, if you are trying to develop your technique in order to overcome difficulties or physical deficiencies, if you do not keep your eye on the larger sides of art—the things which really are music—there is a chance that your appreciations will get dulled and stupefied.

The same with the necessity of getting hold of the colossal amount of detail there is to learn



about the bulk of art itself—the necessity for pianoforte people to know all the readings of the greatest works of art, and for the singers to know how to interpret thousands of vocal pieces of all sorts ; it is very fine to know all about it, but while you are getting to know all about it, you may be losing sight of all that is most of value in connection with it—your own capacity to appreciate it yourself. While you are trying to master everything there is to know, it is just possible you may come to be no better than a registering automaton. It is the lack of consciousness of this that makes fashion sway about so violently.

Thirty years ago, a man who dared to say he appreciated Wagner was loaded with imprecations by the ultra-classicists, who were then the fashion. Now it is the other way round, and a man who will not go the whole hog in manifesting enthusiasm for orgies of mere reckless extravagance becomes the butt of all the self-constituted champions of progress in art. Classicism is good—quite good—but it is easy to make it a mere bore if you do not really understand it; and poetic fervour is good, but it easily degenerates into hysterics and spluttering incoherence. Somehow we

have got to balance the opposite extremes. Classicism wants the infusion of human appreciation, the power to see through the formalities to the thing that appeals as human art.

So also the poetic fervour; we really cannot do without it, but it has to be kept in touch with realities. It has got to be somehow kept in order—and things are kept in order by fitting them in with the things that are outside them. Just so the development of your own selves, which is so essential to your life being good for anything, can be kept in order by your keeping your eyes open to what is going on outside you.

The self is a very poor, futile, mean circumference. Spread it out, and join it on to the rest of the world, and make it expand its power by the consonance of its energy with all that is going on around it, and there is a fine chance of making life worth living.

*September 1908.*

## ROUTINE AND UNDERSTANDING

AT the moment there does not appear to be anything which urgently calls for report or comment ; and we may be thankful there is nothing of such serious import to induce sobriety as there was last term. The thing which is most likely to induce a sort of sobriety in some of us is the unalluring prospect of an exacting spell of routine. It is the inevitable kind of routine which is part and parcel of the necessary order of things in an institution like ours ; and orderly routine is good for us if we can get a sufficiently detached view of it.

Our human nature is apt to rebel against things which have a tiresome way of turning up in orderly succession, and seem to tend to monotony and limitation of our sense of liberty—and I am afraid I must confess to having secret sympathy with people who sometimes feel driven to break loose and get

away from the insistent trammels of law and order. But we clearly cannot do without them. Even Christmas, which seems to come oftener and oftener as we get older, always persists in coming on the same day—whereas Easter, which is the only event of the kind which is not regular in its incidence, too often gives us the impression that its caprices are extremely annoying. Human nature, being what it is, must be expected sometimes to desire more latitude of caprice than would be profitable.

But the thing that always compensates for the weariness of routine is having something interesting to do—and the fact that most of you are genuinely interested in what you are doing is probably the reason why we find the impulse to break loose so little in evidence at the College. We are most of us even so interested that we almost seem to forget the College is an educational establishment!

I do not want to emphasise the fact unnecessarily. It has an oppressive sound in spite of all the hopeful changes which have come about in theories of education since I was a boy. The newest idea is that all processes of education ought to be enjoyable,

because people assimilate so much more quickly what they enjoy, and it is surprising how fast and to what an extent the idea is being realised. It cannot be as much as a little half-century ago that people used to think of schools as places where dry-as-dust old fogeys used to keep what order they could with birch or big stick, and tried to drum into young people's heads a lot of things which did not mean anything to them, and which they learned with distaste, and forgot with promptitude. They taught us symbols and technicalities and formulas, and did not explain what they meant. Nowadays we go to the other extreme and try to appeal to young people's imaginations and to enlarge their understanding from the first; and are even impelled to extenuate, and apologise for reference to formulas at all!

It really ought to be quite obvious that you can neither learn nor enjoy anything much unless you understand it; and that when once you begin to understand, you understand more and more, and the more you understand the more you enjoy. But the mere knowledge of formulas and technicalities cannot give any decently constituted human being any legitimate pleasure. The pleasure comes rightly

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enough when they begin to be understood and to mean something, but it has no right to come before. It is one of the most difficult of things to make people who are learning anything realise that the cramming of their memories with mere formulas and theories is no better than stuffing their minds with husks, and spoils their mental digestion. There are some hapless people who have such dangerous memories that they get positively choked with the mere confused lumber of things that have not any meaning or coherence, and lose the capacity to think at all. Getting to be able to think is much more important than piling up huge slag-heaps of disconnected facts. It is excellent for you to read all you can, and know all you can, but it is not much good in the end if what you read does not soak in and get assimilated. And it will not matter how much you forget if you get your mind enlarged and expanded and more capable of understanding things.

What people call Academicism is for the most part knowledge of formulas without understanding. It is a thing every institution like ours has constantly to be on the look out for and to circumvent. It arises through

the difficulty of providing for so many different types of human beings. Every individuality has its own special aptitudes, its special ways of taking things in, and special things which have attraction for it. But even the most luminous-minded teacher cannot see into the nature of every pupil who comes to him, and find out how to teach him what he has to know in the particular way the particular individual requires.

What is good for one is not good for another, and a teacher who has to tackle a large and reluctant harmony class would soon be only fit for a lunatic asylum if he tried to keep in mind all the individual difficulties which beset the particular individuals. Some would have particular difficulty in avoiding consecutive fifths, some in avoiding false relations; some would want to resolve their discords in the wrong parts, and some would not want to resolve them at all. It would be waste of time to devote prolonged attention to the difficulty which besets some particular individual and is no difficulty to any of the others; and so some sort of general average has to be found which more or less applies to various types of mind, and too often just

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leaves out the best types and merely galls them—which often has very unfortunate results and puts the best type of mind at cross purposes with its teacher, and makes its teacher annoyed with his best type of pupil.

The only absolute solution of such complicated situations is for people to do most of their learning for themselves. It has been said before, and may be serviceably said again many times, that the best teachers are those who can teach people to find out things for themselves; and it may be added that the best learners are those who do not expect to learn everything from their teachers. Each one of us has his own particular way of being bothered, and in the end he has to find it out for himself, and if he does not and gives up the tussle, he goes on being permanently ineffectual.

But in the majority of cases such failures arise from going the wrong way to work; and we get plenty of proofs of it. When we look at some of the paralytic answers which are given in the harmony examinations, for instance, it is obvious that the makers of them have been trying to write their harmonisations mechanically, without looking at them from



any musical point of view. The things do not approach to anything like musical sounds in their heads; and they are trying to apply rules which have no background of perceptible fact in them—and as they do not understand the rules in the light of anything but formulas, they merely break them in the very feeblest fashion.

There are good ways of breaking rules and bad ways. The good ways are the ways of those who understand something, and have reasons even for breaking rules; and the bad ways are the ways of those who have never approached the understanding of what the rules mean. And it is just the same with every branch of musical learning. There is nothing so dreary and hopeless as people solemnly doing just what their teachers tell them to do without any kind of sense of what they are doing. When they only play their passages and do their phrasing as they are told to do, they are no better than machines. They certainly are not nearly so effectual as parrots, because parrots are inherently funny, and mere mechanical performance of pieces just as instructed is not at all funny, but too often exasperating, because it usually is a parody.

The only way to arrive successfully at playing things as you are told is to attain to the actual realisation in effect of the rightness of what you are told, and to play the things not as you are told but better; to feel in your own persons that some special piece of phrasing or musical elocution is admirable and delightful, and to contrive to give the phrase with that feeling, not merely following mechanical instructions.

I know quite well the excuse that is made, that the mastery of countless details of technique and the accepted readings of well-known masterpieces absorbs so much of the energies that the mind has not any vigour left for any more, and it becomes atrophied. It is partly because people do not realise that they would not have to learn each detail separately if they really understood, and could thereby sort the details into the groups to which the same rules or methods apply. When you understand a few things you find the oppressiveness of details begins to lift, and there does not then seem to be so many of them, because so many come together by affinities; and the difficulty of arriving at this kind of understanding too often comes of having to do things one does

not enjoy. One hardly expects people to enjoy practising scales and technical exercises, yet if one understands such things in their wider sense, one can enjoy the feeling that they are helping to a desired end. Enjoyment does not consist solely in the sense of immediate pleasure, but in the sense of the relation of what one is doing to what is to come out of it.

There are all sorts of gradations of enjoyment, and some of them are even painful. To enjoy life fully you have to realise that everything that a man can do in this world has some relation to something else—and the wider the range of relations you are capable of feeling, the more complete and constant is the sum of your enjoyment. There is no more futile misconception than the theory of living in the present. What is the present? It is a moment and it is gone! It becomes interesting solely through what it is connected with. If it is linked on to something wider it begins to spread out and become big, and the little moments become greater and greater when their connection with more and more other moments is realised. We believe that the way to enjoy life is to fill it as full as it will hold.

But it is of no use to fill it with details of

which the inherent connection is not perceived. You might as well fill yourself with bran and be a doll at once. If you could only see it, there is an obvious connection between all the things you do. Your harmony is connected with your practical work ; your playtime with your working time ; your gossip with your wisdom ; your achievements with your failures ; your appreciation with your criticism ; your laughter with your tears. It is the bane of the undeveloped mind to overestimate immediate sensations and vivid moments, and what you are here for is to develop your mind, and learn how all things that have any value in life are not isolated but inherently connected ; and that vivid moments are only vivid because of their connection with other moments.

In these days we are slowly realising that everything is achieved by mind. Mere blundering brute strength is quite out of date. The powers of a dozen elephants are quite useless to cope with the smallest and weakest little man who can use his wits. And the little man gets the better of the elephants by understanding what he has got to do—and it is the same with the things you have to do here. You have a vast lot of different

objects to achieve. Some of you want to be public singers, some to be solo pianists, some to be great violinists and some to be cathedral organists, some to be successful teachers and some to compose masterpieces. But whatever you want to do, the same facts apply. If you merely concern yourselves with the letter, and do not find out the spirit which the letter spells, you are condemned to be little better than lay figures. You cannot teach people what you yourselves do not understand, and you cannot convince people of what you play unless you really understand it, and understanding in your case is feeling the genuine music in what you have to deal with. Of course you have to hear and to play plenty of things that are uncongenial; some things that it is impossible to translate into terms of musical feeling. But it does not necessarily follow that things which appear to be uncongenial at first may not prove to have meanings if you look hard enough at them. It is a very paltry attitude of mind which despises everything which does not jump to the eyes at once.

People generally despise most what is too good for them. There is a familiar French

proverb that "To understand all is to pardon all"; and we might give this an English flavour by saying "The more a man understands the less he despises." Getting understanding is a wonderful way of helping people to have fellow feelings with other people who are quite different from themselves. If the French proverb and its English parallel are true, the application of them would have a great influence on the general diffusion of friendliness and open-mindedness.

In the same way the more people understand different kinds of minds and different kinds of occupations, the better chance they have of judging both of their own type and of every fresh contingency that presents itself. And this has important bearing on your own situation. If the College has any drawbacks, it is that every one who is taking advantage of its inestimable facilities for learning is being what is called specialised. And specialisation has the effect of limiting the range of the judgement.

Judgement is the power of discerning the true proportionate relation of the facts or factors of any situation which presents itself. It is the hardest thing to come by in the

world, and the most valuable. Some people are born with an aptitude for it. Those who are not so fortunate can only develop it by extending the range of subjects and situations and personalities of which they have some serviceable understanding. It is by such expansion of the understanding that a man gets more clues to test things by. Specialisation such as we get at the College makes people judge things mainly in the light of the one special subject to which they devote themselves and in the attitude of mind which belongs to it ; and they are liable to be at a loss when they have to judge of things outside the range or system of that one subject. One of the things which caused musicians in this country to be so isolated and put in a back street half a century ago was that they were over-specialised. They were so absorbed in their own profession that they had no standards whereby to judge things outside it, and their understanding of their own business was even narrowed by not being able to see it in its relation to other things.

I am quite aware that it is difficult for young people to understand what is meant by understanding, and why it is so desirable. It is

mostly only old people who arrive at it after a great deal of mixed experience ; and it must be sadly admitted that many old people after a life of mere conventionality and comfort understand less at sixty-five than they did at ten. For young people have much greater capacity for adapting themselves to facts, and much greater readiness for generalising than old people. The misfortune is that they are in too great a hurry to generalise before they have understood enough facts to make generalising safe. Generalising in a hurry sometimes induces as much lack of understanding as not thinking at all. And it is through lack of understanding that there is so much misery and squalor and destitution, and groundless ill-will, and vice and folly and crime in the world.

The object of education is not to supply mere concrete knowledge, but to widen the understanding and thereby help to better conditions for all men, and to make judgement prevail over chance whims and perverse spasms of primitive instinct. It must help men to be fair to one another and to see things as they really are ; to abolish the stupid worship of wealth and luxury and deceptive titles, and



to put the genuine delight in art, such as we feel it, in its proper pre-eminence, as a better thing to live for and help other people to than all the things mere possession of millions can give.

If the world only understood, how different would be the position of our art! It ought to be a lesson to us to try and get some understanding of important things outside our art when we see how stupid people are when they repudiate it, and deny it any sphere among the things that are of service to mankind. We can all see lack of understanding and its piteous results when it is in respect of something we ourselves more or less understand. An instance in my own experience will bring it home as well as anything.

One evening last term I went to hear an old College pupil perform one of the greatest feats it is possible for a pianist to undertake. Now people in general profess to like to see exceptional feats, and plume themselves on the knowledge which can distinguish special strokes of skill. They crowd to see acrobats, strong men, jugglers, and singers who can screech a note or two higher than other people. Such people will

talk of a feat as if it were in itself a concrete universal thing that every one who respects himself ought to witness. In reality they are only setting up as admirable the standard of their own meagre understanding. They appreciate things which are within the narrow limits of their minds, and are impelled to set up a barrier to prevent other people from understanding more than they do. They understand the difficulty of spinning a plate, or taking a bicycle to pieces while a man is riding it, because they know that if they tried themselves they would break the plate and have to send for the doctor to repair their own bruises. But they would not have the very remotest idea of the nature of the feat performed by the young pianist I referred to.

The night that he played there were several millions of people in London, and out of those millions there were certainly not fifty people or anywhere near it who could have performed the feat which he did, even to do it mechanically. Yet there was only a sprinkling of people in the hall, and hardly any of them understood enough about it to appreciate the complexity of attention, the judgement, the skill, the endurance, and the many factors of

mind and memory and muscle which the feat illustrated.

The same evening I had to look in at a theatre where there was a sort of mixed entertainment, and found myself trying to make out why the people on the stage were making such piteous, abject idiots of themselves. They were propounding the very thinnest and silliest of artificial funniments, accompanied by grimaces and contortions and gestures and noises which they evidently hoped would prove amusing to the people who came to see and hear them.

When one comes to think of it, that sort of thing is not a high compliment to an audience ; and not being engrossed by what was going on on the stage, I turned to see if there was anything interesting to be got out of my fellow spectators. There were plenty of them, and most of them had their mouths wide open and were making delighted guffaws. The management had rightly gauged the standard of understanding of its patrons.

Here is a case of a first-rate feat on the one hand and a piteous exhibition of hollow mechanical cheap fooling on the other, and the favour of the many was on the side of the fooling. The anomaly is purely the result

of insufficient diffusion of understanding. If there had been enough people in this huge city who had developed their understanding even to an elementary stage, the real feat would have been witnessed by a crowd of enthusiastic watchers of every point achieved. And so it is with every several branch of art with which you are concerned. If people understood they would be interested. But so far they most of them do not even understand that art is worth understanding; so even the mere feats of skill which can be done in the name of art are treated by the majority as if they did not exist.

But you cannot fairly blame them if you labour under the same disability yourselves about things of which you have not troubled to get any understanding. Of course it is not either possible or desirable to have expert knowledge of many different subjects. But it is possible to have a sympathetic insight into many diverse things that concern the mind and give an aptitude to judge rightly. But it is not to be done by the mere learning of somebody's formulas and figures. It is not till you have got behind formulas and feel what they are meant to represent that

knowledge begins to be of service to you. The technicalities of harmony and counterpoint, of pianoforte playing and violin playing, and analysis of great works of art, are all supposed to amount to knowledge. But a man has to pass through knowledge to understanding. Even if the mere knowledge passes away, the mind through which it has passed and been assimilated attains a wider range of mental vision. As far as your own special work is concerned this means that the most hopeful course is constantly to remember that the technicalities are not ends in themselves but means to ends; that they are only steps to the realisation of music, and that it needs persistent energy to keep the actual musical feeling alive, and prevent it being drowned by the burden of the mechanical things when the purely mechanical things are allowed to dominate and occupy attention as if they were ends in themselves.

But if this is true of your own special work it is true also of all sorts of things outside it. If you keep the right attitude of mind also towards them you are sure to widen your understanding and help to make your judgement more sure and your life more full of

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interest—and it will react even upon your music and make you understand that better too and find more in it; in due time it will also enable you to make other people see more in it, which will be a good thing for every one concerned.

*January 1911.*

## ENJOYMENTS

IN the first place let me say that I believe it to be of the highest importance that you should enjoy holidays with all your might. It is of the greatest importance that people who make art the object of their lives should keep fresh and capable of enjoying all enjoyable things. No institution of our kind can be expected to take first rank that does not concern itself with anything but its own particular business. If you concern yourselves only with just the limited sphere of your own personal work you only see a very small bit of life, and get but a very limited range of experience. You may sometimes see a man working furiously night and day to perfect himself in something for which he appears to have an aptitude, and, apparently, never going ahead at all. It really does happen sometimes that the more a man works in a limited area the less he can do. It

is not only that he needs change and relaxation, but that the conditions of life are so complicated, and reach out their tentacles in so many directions, that if all things outside a man are shut out his character and disposition get stunted.

Character begins with innate qualities, but it grows only by experience. Music, of all the arts, touches most widely on things which are humanly interesting ; and if you shut out the knowledge of what is interesting in your fellow human beings, how is your art going to grow ? Art, like many other things, gets its food from outside, and it is a mistake to suppose it can feed exclusively on itself. And art is always interwoven with character, and we even have frequently to observe that character counts for more in the end than natural gifts of any kind, whether artistic or literary. And overmuch concentration in one direction has a tendency to lessen the finer qualities of character. Character comprises a vast number of traits. One of the foremost is judgement, which is also one of the rarest and is not disposed to grow very luxuriantly under the pressure of profuse and prolonged doses of scales and Czerny exercises.



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Character also includes steadfastness and honesty, spirit and endurance, open-mindedness and cheerfulness under all manner of varying conditions, and one of its most important attributes is the capacity to enjoy. The capacity to enjoy grows and gets finer with experience of really enjoyable things. Then, again, different attributes of character help one another. For instance, the capacity really to enjoy depends in a great measure upon judgement. Lots of people make a mess of their lives by not exercising judgement in the things they take as their enjoyments. Young people are not to be expected to exercise much judgement in such matters. They are sometimes so ready to enjoy that they take whatever comes, without any concern as to whether the enjoyable things are likely to last or lead to new and more enjoyable enjoyments. In that case, of course, holidays are very useful, as they keep people's capacities for enjoying things outside their special provinces in a lively condition, and give experience. If people make mistakes, that is useful too. For those who have any sense at all can learn as much from making mistakes as from anything else they make or mar.

When people get old and have had a lot of experience and think about it, they realise that enjoyments are the food on which fruitful work can be done. I remember once being venturesome enough to say to the famous philosopher, Mr. Herbert Spencer, that I had seen him a few nights before at rather a trumpery play; to which he gave the solemn answer, "I cultivate amusements on principle." He had probably observed scientifically that his nature was in urgent need of such treatment. What he meant was that every hard worker has to keep his personal self fresh by something which he can enjoy in some different manner from his own absorbing work. And if this is necessary for the philosopher it is very much more necessary for the musician. Of course, there are pleasures and pleasures! The people who live for their pleasures altogether, and think they can enjoy things without work, generally end by being hopelessly bored. Their pleasures merely make them silly, and the sillier they get the more futile their pleasures become.

But we come to the College with the intention of doing something; and the people who have made up their minds to do something

are in a position of advantage, and are unlikely to choose forms of distraction which lead up to such distressing futilities as the giggling and guzzling which appear to occupy such a wide space in the lives of some aimless people. People who address themselves to some definite work or other are more likely to choose enjoyments which are enhanced by being interesting, and in the very enjoyment lay the foundations of higher enjoyments; and they can afford to choose their pleasures with growing judgement.

Of course, different people have different ways of enjoying themselves. It is not given to all people to enjoy fine poetry, and the splendid records of human fortunes and misfortunes which make history, or the subtleties of philosophy, or the fortifying certainties of science, or even the finer branches of fiction. But it is worth while for most people to try. The sphere of poetry lies very near the domain of music, and those who feed themselves upon it enhance their artistic outfit. And even those who cannot find enjoyment in literature can sometimes find it in great questions which exercise the public mind. If they cannot even do that, it is better to play cricket and football and tennis and hockey, and do some of the

thousand things which give health to body and mind than to think there is nothing outside their particular business. But, of course, I should be happiest when young people can find some of their greatest enjoyments outside their art in things which build up their finer qualities of nature, of which reading is one of the most hopeful.

You have some fine examples near at hand. Do you never observe how much higher and stronger the musicians stand who enjoy things outside their art? Think of Sir Walter Parratt, who gets through almost more musical work than any one of our time, and see how vast his enjoyment of literature, and how great his knowledge of it is. How he has absorbed it into himself and has the memory of it at command, and how it gives him a position of quite special delightfulness, even in the range of his art. Think of Dr. Walford Davies, and realise that so much of the charm of his actual compositions lies in the cultivated mind which expresses its deep delight in the fine poems he selects and sets in such intimately interesting musical terms. Think of his delightful "Nursery Rhymes" we had at the Union At Home, and realise that their freshness and point

and subtle quaintness come from his having kept his nature fresh with the enjoyment of things outside his art—things which dive into the problems of humanity—even into the humanity of the babes! Think of the musicians who have not been so fortunate as to have capacities for such enjoyments, and what a chance of widening their art they seem to have missed.

But, of course, there are times and seasons for everything. There are the times for holidays and the times for work—and, with some people, it is just as well that the period of holidays is clearly defined. Though one may counsel the widening of outlook by every means possible, it will be worse than useless if it cannot be done without interfering with concentration when it is time for work. I know too well how difficult it is to prevent one interest interfering with another; what temptations there are to drop a thing directly it gets wearisome or boring and take to something else! There are some natures which, when there is something which has got to be done, are driven by an almost imperious necessity to want to do something else. But one of the greatest secrets of making life worth living, and achieving something, whether in

art or in business, is to develop the capacity to do a thing when it has got to be done. It sounds very simple, but human nature being what it is, it is not so easy to achieve ; and when people are inclined to give way to indolence or other lower impulses, they even sometimes persuade themselves that a thing has not got to be done when it has. So we must add the amendment that the secret is to see when a thing has to be done and then do it. Now that you have done with your long holidays, it is to be hoped they will bear fruit in making you enjoy work as much as holidays, till the time comes round for another spell of letting human nature have a fling, at Christmas time.

*September 1909.*

## APPRECIATION—TRUE AND FALSE

IT is pleasant to be able to begin the term with an exhilarating ceremony. I have received intimation from the Royal Humane Society<sup>1</sup> that they propose to give Mr. Claud P. Mackness, a student of the College, their certificate

<sup>1</sup> From the *R.C.M. Magazine*, Christmas Term, 1911. (Vol. viii. No. 1, p. 31.)

“ At a meeting of the Royal Humane Society, held at their office, 4 Trafalgar Square, on the 14th of November 1911, Admiral Sir George Digby Morant, K.C.B., in the chair, it was resolved unanimously ‘ That the Honorary Testimonial of this Society, inscribed on parchment, be hereby given to

CLAUD P. MACKNESS

for having on the 26th of August 1911 gone to the rescue of E. L. J. DURANT, who was in imminent danger of drowning in the sea at Bar-mouth, and whose life he gallantly saved.

‘ F. A. CLAUGHTON, *Secretary*.

‘ G. DIGBY MORANT, *Chairman*. ’ ”

The following is an extract from a letter to Sir Hubert Parry from Engineer Lieutenant Griffith W. Jones (*H.M.S. Actaeon*), an eye-witness of the accident, who made a recommendation to the Society :

“ I was one of the witnesses of this determined and courageous effort, and no doubt, had it not been for Mr. Claud Mackness, the gentleman would have lost his life. . . . Mr. Mackness himself is ignorant of the fact that the Society has recognised his effort.”

for pluckily rescuing a man who was carried out of his depth by the tide at Barmouth and in danger of being drowned. The Society having expressed the desire that the document should be presented to him in form before an assembly of sympathetic witnesses, I take this opportunity to present it, feeling sure that there could not be any collection of people who would be more pleased than you will be. For the manner in which Mr. Mackness gripped his opportunity makes us proud. We feel that he has not only won honour for himself but also for the College.

There is something especially agreeable in his having shown his mettle in an achievement quite outside our own normal activities. We like to realise that when any one belonging to the College has a chance to show spirit in things outside music, he is equal to the occasion. The more we have evidence that pupils can show up well in other things besides music, such as cricket and football and saving people from drowning, the more there is to show that the College is enjoying good health and vigour. And though our gallant Collegian may modestly deprecate our making too much fuss about his successful exploit, we must be



sure it is very agreeable to him that we are proud of it.

Appreciation is so very pleasant. We all like it very much, though it does not fall to many to win it in so decisive a manner. Most people, if they get it at all, have to get it by prolonged patience and hard work. But that does not lessen the credit of an action which leaves a bright and permanent mark of distinction on a man's life. For every one has not the generous impulse nor the spirit to do the right thing at a moment's notice. Actions of this sort are generally the spontaneous outcome of a well-constituted disposition. There is not much time to think of appreciation. There is the call to do something that requires energy and possibly entails danger, and if the man's instincts are sound and healthy his nature responds. Some people do not seem to be able to do anything without a prospect of reward or appreciation. When the thirst to be appreciated takes possession, it too often happens that a man does not care a bit whether he deserves it or not, nor whether the people whose appreciation he tries to win have enough sense for their appreciation to be worth having.

The matter of getting appreciated is indeed a very complicated and puzzling affair. Some very few natures, of heroic mould, seem to go on doing the best they can with such abilities as they have got, without concerning themselves whether the results get them any reputation or acknowledgement. They deserve our highest admiration, and they often achieve great things with a certain aloofness which seems to set them above their fellow-mortals. They go on quietly enjoying the sense of getting the best out of themselves. The pleasure of achieving is sufficient for them. There is for them the sense of growth, which is one of the surest guarantees of the individual life's being worth living, and we learn in due time how happily they are constituted. In any case, we feel how agreeable the contrast is to the type of man who is always dragging conversation round to his personal affairs, and calling attention to his wonderful qualities and his distinguished achievements and the things which he can do so much better than any one else. We all of us infinitely prefer the man who lets us find out his greatness for ourselves to the person who is always hustling us into acknowledging it; and we always know that the man who

does not throw his abilities at our heads on every possible occasion is much more likely to do something really great and fine than the man who wants to induce all and sundry to grovel before him on insufficient evidence.

In reality, the man who cannot get along without incessant praise and adulation is much weaker and more dependent on the opinions of his fellow-men than the man who delights in doing good work because doing good work satisfies him. The man who is too greedy for appreciation too often produces not the best he might do if he were perfectly sincere, but the thing which will get him credit with a lot of people who are incapable of really judging whether what he does is good or bad. The poor thing thirsts for sympathy, and would sacrifice everything—his happiness and cleanliness of mind and his general well-being and his good relations with really intelligent friends, and all that really makes life worth living—to get it. And the result is that the appreciation he gets is less worth having every day he lives. For as he goes on adapting his achievements to those who have no understanding, he goes on making them stupider day by day, and his own work becomes worse and worse as it

follows their increasing dulness ; and he ends by being little better than a crazy egotist, who has lost the capacity to enjoy doing things well and lives only to hear his excitable dupes pouring hysterical flatteries into his ears. The craving stupidly gratified becomes a kind of disease, and the pretence of great achievement a mockery.

And such absurd situations come out of it. When the craving has taken possession of a singer or a performer, directly he comes before an audience he feels that he must have their applause at all costs. Yet if he were to meet any individual member of that audience personally in private, he would not only have absolute contempt for his opinions, he would think it an impertinence for him to have any opinions at all ! One might ask why it should be so important to please unintelligent people just because there are a lot of them together, while if they were taken individually by the person who wants to win their applause, he would think their taste and intelligence quite worthless.

There is another very queer paradox which is the outcome of the excessive craving to be appreciated. When a person who is before

the public gets to find out that they are incapable of appreciating his finest strokes of art, it sometimes occurs to him that they are capable of being interested by fantastic behaviour and eccentricities which have nothing whatever to do with it. It may perhaps be admitted that it is an open chance whether a big public would pay attention to the greatest performer of the greatest music unboomed, as long as he behaved like an ordinary simple person. But if he adopted strange gesticulations, turned round and made faces at his audience, interjected funny remarks, wore preposterous locks, and generally gave them antics and the idea that he was something quaint and odd, they would soon be in raptures.

But if we look at it a little attentively, both sides seem to be hopelessly illogical. It is the poorest compliment to the audience to indicate their lack of intelligence by giving them antics and gesticulations to get the applause and appreciation which they would not give to a man's art, however fine ; and the appreciation which the fantastic performer gets is totally worthless, because it is given for the antics and not for the art, for which he pretends that he seeks it. The mockery is in the form of

tit-for-tat, and as far as both parties realise the fact it amuses them.

One might plausibly think it would be much better for the person who craved for sympathy to get two or three people together who really understood—men and women of tried judgement and discernment—and win appreciation from them. Truly such appreciation might be the most worth having of any there is; and where it is really to be had it is a stand-by and a comfort to those whose destiny it is to go through a good deal of life and effort alone.

But, unfortunately, we have to admit that the audience of two or three does not come off. To be quite fair and to look at both sides of the matter, it is the sort of thing that ends too often in little cliques and coteries and mutual admiration societies; it ministers to self-complacency and narrow views, and takes all the warmer humanity and generous freedom of thought out of what is done or attempted. Even the most enlightened people need the contact with infinite varieties of minds and dispositions.

That is how some compensation comes out of the thirst for sympathetic response from a

multitude. Very few people are capable of being really exhilarated by an audience of half a dozen, however enlightened. Most people, even of fine disposition and fine abilities, infinitely prefer an audience of a thousand dolts. There is such exhilaration in being the focus of two thousand eyes, and seeing the flash of a thousand faces. It thrills the speakers, the performers, the actors. To the person who has any humanity about him it gives extra vitality; it enhances his wits and the passion to exercise power over a throng, and to get into touch with the innermost springs of their natures spurs to the utmost effort the man is capable of. And what supreme intoxication of delight it is to the man who seems to lift an audience, to take them along with him, to make their rapt expression follow every mood!

Though we may criticise and point to the absurdities which arise from allowing the craving for appreciation too free a rein, the value of sympathetic response in helping a man to the best he can get out of himself is undeniable. It is well to glorify the heroic attitude of apparent indifference and aloofness from such inspiration. In reality it is almost

inconceivable. Possibly it does not really exist, but is only suggested by a shy, unobtrusive or un-egotistical nature; or by a nature too proud to admit the apparent lack of power to win recognition, and too noble to condescend. One can hardly imagine a person making art of any kind, which he must necessarily make for his fellow-creatures, and being really indifferent whether they like it or not. Nearly all the best art that is ever made is made with the help of appreciation. The great orator would become quite an indifferent spokesman if he addressed an audience of savages who did not understand a word of what he was saying. The greatest of composers would be paralysed if he knew that the only music his audience would sympathise with would have to be in a scale of whole tones.

The responsive sympathy takes effect in the kind of art which either the performer or the composer produces. One thinks of art as the product of the individual, but it is not so entirely. The appreciative public has a most wonderful influence in directing the course of the artist. Its sympathy impels to renewed efforts and even supplies additional strength. Its indifference petrifies. It is in this way



that a nation exercises its power over its art. The unenlightened public can encourage shoddy and shams and blatancy and levity and vulgarity, and such things flourish like the green slime of the foul pool under their influence. They can also be induced to favour fine things in art when the artistically endowed people who know what is fine and honourable are true to themselves. That is where the solution of the puzzling problem is to be found ; and it cannot be pretended that it is a comforting or encouraging solution to those who are in a hurry to see their portraits in the picture papers, and anecdotes about them in gossip columns.

We try to mould history as it passes in accordance with our own ideas and wishes ; but we are not masters of it, however much true education may help us to anticipate it. We can only go our several ways in honesty. It is the unenlightened egotism that is the enemy. It is the egotism that looks for the favourable verdict of the crowd and yields to it to win the suffrages of those who have no understanding. Enlightened egotism might, it is true, be pleased to see its portrait in the picture papers, not because its personal vanity

was gratified, but because it proved that it had got the herd, or some of them, to understand something worth understanding, which they would not have understood unless some people, enlightened egotist included, had worked hard to get them to understand.

A man who forgoes the use of his best powers and only uses lower ones for a reward, defeats his own life and the lives of others. It is by his best powers that he will achieve the best results, not by his lower powers. Every man who courts mere barren reputation by forgoing the use of his best powers makes it more difficult for the bewildered public to award their appreciation to those who really do the best work of which they are capable. It makes it more difficult for people to develop their understanding and to make their lives really fuller and more enjoyable. It makes it easier for the public to indulge their worst qualities instead of their best.

Every step which the public makes in the direction of understanding, whether of art, literature, politics, social questions, scientific questions, or personal qualities of character, makes it more easy for it to bestow its appreciation where it is most fully deserved,

and makes that appreciation more worth having.

So there really is no need to decry the craving for appreciation, but only the senseless and unintelligent form of it. It is the standard which is so often faulty. If we judge of success as the world judges of it, we shall be easily discontented because we do not win a success which is not worth having. A man cannot really be a success who does not get the best out of himself. No doubt it is painful to have to do without appreciation. There must be martyrs at all times, but they most of them win appreciation of some kind, sometimes the appreciation which they are most fit for. Some people are happier as martyrs than the idols of the market-place. We have to go our own ways. If we get appreciation we have ultimately to gauge its true worth; if we do not, the public does in the end.

We are banded together here at the College to try to help the public to understand a few things in connection with music; and to enable it to bestow some of its encouraging appreciation serviceably. Our efforts have not always met with sympathetic interpretation. But we pull together and try to take what

comes with equanimity and understanding. The race is not always to the swift nor the battle invariably to the strong, but time and chance happen to all. The best frame of mind is to welcome appreciation if it comes with due modesty, and to find out how to do without it if we must.

*January 1912.*

## TRADITIONS AND CONVENTIONS

WE feel confident after ample experience that the spiritual atmosphere of the College helps weak ones to go straight, and encourages impulses that are healthy and generous. There cannot be any doubt that such influence is of the very greatest importance, and it is inspiring to think that we can all of us in our several ways take part in maintaining and strengthening it.

It is attained by building up a consistent College tradition, by the maintenance of a high standard of life, in which straightness, keenness, good sense, good fellowship, the capacity for taking pleasure in doing well and promptly what has to be done, and enjoying life intelligently are conspicuous features. It is good for every one to have the feeling of being a member of a community which is winning its way to an individual and

honourable position in the world; to take pride in following those who have helped to build up the College tradition in the past, and to go on building and maintaining its constant progress.

In this connection it may be useful to consider a little more decisively what tradition means. For young people who are trying to do something worth doing and are still in the early stages of that endeavour sometimes find it difficult, through inexperience, to distinguish between tradition and convention—and they sometimes repudiate traditions under the impression that they are warding off conventions. So it is of importance to have a clear idea of the difference between them.

The difference really is that traditions are alive and conventions are dead. Young people are hindered from distinguishing between them because while both traditions and conventions are recommended to them by elderly advisers, it is to be observed that a good many people when they get old have relapsed into mechanical habits and do a lot of things in art and elsewhere which have no real sense in them, because it saves the trouble of thinking or of trying to do things differently from what

they are accustomed to, or from what they see other people doing. So when old people of sense preach the advisability of doing things in accordance with wisdom garnered from the experience of those who have gone before, some ardent young people quite naturally rebel, and think they are preaching conventions; and, as they feel themselves very much alive, they resent the advice which seems to involve giving up being alive in their own way; they repudiate things which would even help their own vitality, if misconceptions did not blind them.

All the advantages we enjoy in the general ordering of our lives are the outcome of strenuous and devoted endeavour on the part of those who have gone before us. All our methods of art are the discoveries and contrivances of countless generations of wise people who were physically and mentally as much alive as we are. Our College tradition has been built up by those who were most active in doing well; by people who showed good sense in the ordering of their lives and their interests; by people who were set on enjoying their lives by making good use of them. It is not possible to make life worth

living without taking advantage of what the people who have gone before have found out about it. And that is tradition. Rules which are merely followed because they are rules, and without any sense of what they mean, are little better than dead conventions.

If you want to be thoroughly alive and to make life worth living you must question things which appear to be mere conventions; if you do not they will choke you.

That appears to be the origin of the rebellious attitude which is frequent and familiar in young people. It is a very healthy instinct, and it comes to harm merely because people without much experience are not in the most favourable position to distinguish traditions which are profitable from conventions which are unprofitable and stupefying. It does require a certain amount of understanding to distinguish between one and the other; and that is the reason why people who do not want to be bothered to think have to follow customs so blindly. Some customs are serviceable enough and society in general could not well get on without them. But like rules they are most likely to be serviceable when they are understood and their appositeness proved by



practical experience. Lots of customs which are serviceable in certain conditions are worse than useless in other conditions, and it wants but little thinking to see it. When electric light superseded candles the custom of having a rim to catch the guttering wax or tallow became absurd ; but people who do not use their minds like to see the rim in an ornamental electric-light bracket because they are accustomed to it ; and it is the same in art and in the ordinary affairs of daily life. Most people do not think, they only feel ; and when they feel comfortable in doing what they are accustomed to do, or what they see other people are accustomed to do, they do not enquire whether what they are doing has any sense or advantage in it. One of the things they miss is the chance of establishing their own personal individuality.

We have not developed our College tradition by following established customs, but by exerting our own individual judgement about things, and by dispensing with things that are mere dead conventions and finding out what customs and traditions had life in them, and adopting the good sense we got out of them for our own needs. We naturally

want the College to be different from other institutions in its characteristic spirit. It could not be that if it were merely content to do what it was customary to do or modelled its life on that of other similar institutions. We had to find out our own way, taking as a foundation such apposite traditions as we could lay hold of; then slowly building our own particular tradition on these foundations; and dispensing, in the light of experience, with the conventions which are merely bits of tradition which have no life left in them and have become ossified.

The spirit of our British race is shown in the determination not to be sat upon or overwhelmed by conventions. But it gets the reputation of being slow because it is careful to choose patiently the things that will be serviceable, and not to throw away with the rubbish a great deal that still might serve admirably for personal and general well-being. The persistence of energy is at the bottom of it—the persistence which can control itself till it is sure of the difference between live traditions and dead conventions.

A certain amount of apparent disorder in art and in other things is a sign of life. The

world does not get on by doing the same things every day, but by finding out the things it is not worth while doing or putting up with, and doing something better or more serviceable.

When we come across things which appear to be disorderly we ought to distinguish between what is merely wanton and silly and such things as upset existing order to get something better. Before you take it upon yourselves to disturb existing order it is advisable to get some capacity to distinguish between what is merely formal and obstructive and what is alive and sensible. It must be confessed that impatience with existing order does not often go with the amount of understanding which is necessary before there is a likelihood of its being disturbed with wisdom and profit. Some people are in such a hurry to do things their own way that they cannot wait to see whether their way is better than other people's—and they sometimes make a splash, and very often make very little more. And what, in heaven's name, when you come to think of it, is the use of a splash?

We all of us want help from one another. There is no such thing as being wise all by

oneself. The man is wisest who can pick out and apply the wisdom of other people, of the past as well as the present. We pick the brains of the past most because the brains of the present bewilder us so much. Personal and social relations and misdevised reputations prevent our seeing clearly the drift of our contemporaries, whereas the people who have gone before have got sifted and do represent something definite. The general sum of what we can learn from them is that which makes tradition; and in our particular case the sum of all the best thinking and doing and living of the College people of the past is what is building up our College tradition and attitude of mind.

Before I leave the subject, there are two small things it is desirable not to overlook. On the one hand the good traditions of any institution or school are most helpful supports for the feeble-minded and the feeble-willed when they are looked at in the right way; but on the other they can become seductive demoralisers where they are looked at in the wrong way. When we belong to an institution which has sound and sensible traditions, we find we have a lead given us by the general

attitude of mind without our having to decide between conventions and traditions. Lots of people who do not trouble their heads whether things are conventions or living guides of action are kept in the ways of good sense by the general mental attitude which is the outcome of sane traditions ; and as long as the institution which has them continues to be alive and moving it will always be so.

But there often comes to well-established institutions and to old people, and also to young people who inherit the prestige of fine traditions, a condition which is not helpful but the reverse. That danger arises when an institution or branch of society has attained to such prestige that those who belong to it become over-complacent, and think they may take things easy and sun themselves in the glory that has been accumulated by others and is being adopted by themselves. It is like the young man who says to himself and all comers, "I am the son of Jones who made the first wireless to the moon, and I am twiddling my thumbs. My dad made enough for us both."

The type is unfortunately familiar, and we know what it is bad and good for. And it

would be just the same with people who sat down and said, "We belong to this or that institution, which is a jolly fine place, and can even put letters to our names which show that we are distinguished. Now we can take it easy." That is the way institutions as well as people go to the dogs. It is under such circumstances that traditions degenerate into conventions and even nations collapse in mere self-complacency. We have not got to that stage of prestige as yet. If the College ever does get there it will be through the spirit and good sense of yourselves as well as of those who have gone before you. It will be a grand thing to have helped in achieving it; but a very pitiful situation if those who hereafter enjoyed the advantages of having it achieved for them thought they could sit down and take it easy. We owe it to those who have gone before us to improve upon what they have done, and those who come after us will owe it to us to improve on what we have done and so keep the tradition growing.

The College grows and prospers only when it is thoroughly alive—that is obvious—not when it is taking it easy and feeling comfortable. One of the surest incentives

to progress is to feel uncomfortable. If we are healthily constituted we feel uncomfortable when we realise that something might be made better than it is, and then we start to help to make it so. The best retrospect a man can have when he is getting to the end of his little spell of living is to look back and feel in himself that there were some things that wanted making better in his time, and that he had really helped to make them so.

Even here there must be things which might be made better, and for the present there cannot be a much pleasanter occupation than finding them out and trying to make them better. Every little person's little life counts; and when it is made better—really better—it is better for those who are associated with it. The little life counts in its relation to the College, and the College counts in its relation to the country at large, and so by ever-expanding relations to wider and wider spheres of influence.

The tradition which is built up by the activities of individual lives does not concern the College itself alone, but helps to the bettering of a considerable part of humanity. No doubt it is but a little place by the side of

a great university, but it is not by size or numbers alone that its value can be gauged ; but by the amount of wholesome influence it is capable of radiating on all sides. And that is achievable mainly by fine traditions.

*May 1912.*



## CHARACTER

### I. ITS FORMATION

IT takes some of the remorselessness out of death if we think that we can any of us be doing such things and leading such lives that men will admit that we have run honourable courses when our time comes. Some are disheartened because they think their apportionment of gifts is limited and that they never can make a gallant show among their fellows. But it is not by gifts alone that men may win honour among their fellows, but by the consistent cleanness and straightness and strenuousness of their lives, and the honest use of such gifts as they have. There are plenty of men endowed with great gifts and powers who win no deep regard and who do not excite hearty pleasure when men think of them—such as use their gifts for mere personal and selfish

ends in crooked and ignoble ways ; seeking what they call the main chance and barren lip-service from the casual-minded, and a reputation that has no real human glow in it.

It is very commonly held that the majority cannot discern fine qualities or rightly judge a noble life. It is no doubt true that silly, trivial people are not naturally disposed to look for what is noble and generous in their fellows. And if that is so, what would it matter whether they were pleased or not? But even they are not always silly and trivial. When they are pulled up sharp by some serious crisis or trouble they find there is something besides triviality to engage their feelings. Nobody is trivial at all hours—and when it is said that it is not worth while to please trivial people, it might be more true to say that it is not worth while to please people when they happen to be in the trivial humour. If one could catch them at a moment when they are not silly and trivial their appreciation would be worth having. And in the end, a life that is led with steadfast honesty, self-mastery, and goodwill to others gets understood by the veriest idiots. For all that may be said by the prophets of confusion, men of

all sorts like to see really fine qualities in their fellow-men. It makes them feel pleased with their kind and hopeful.

One of the most familiar of our experiences is to see people greatly amused by the type of man who has a genius for finding base motives in other men for everything they do, especially if it has an honourable complexion—and people laugh and seem to agree. But that is when they are not thinking; when they come to use their minds a little they much prefer to think that everybody is capable of honest motives, however easy and amusing it may be to make out that they are actuated by bad ones. But when it does come to pass that some man gives proof time after time that he is actuated by short-sighted, mean, ungenerous motives they do not put him among their heroes, however much he may entertain them by his perversities or astonish them by his remarkable gifts. They do not take such men for their models or their leaders except in the things in which they happen to excel.

It is worth remarking that many men who have great special gifts seem to have gaps in their mental outfit in other respects,

and sometimes are singularly stupid and blind. Nearly all the crooked things that are done are the result of stupidity and blindness. They never bring any solid fruit that is worth having and generally defeat themselves ; for it is astonishing how quickly people scent crookedness and how it puts them on their guard. If the men who are inclined to such things were only a little more wide-awake they would not do them. It is sometimes through being engrossed in other things that they do not keep wide-awake to their deficiencies ; so we can find excuses for being charitable even if we know better than to imitate them.

It is very difficult to keep wide-awake in many directions, and life has so many sides that most people are defeated in one direction or another. One of the things people need to be wide-awake about is the special way in which their own mischievous impulses could make havoc of their lives. Most people get by experience some kind of notion of the direction in which they are liable to go wrong, and when they have any sense they are on their guard. The worst of it is that when they do go wrong they have such a tiresome way of forgetting it, and people have grown so con-

siderate nowadays that when they have found out the particular line in which any one is liable to go crooked, as it is easy enough for any onlooker to do, they take very particular care not to mention it. So the man who has begun to let his lower impulses get the better of him, before long loses the power of being aware of it; and tells himself fairy stories about his own beautiful character, until going wrong becomes part of his regular habits whenever inclination comes. It is as well to remember that when a man has done anything crooked or poisonous or foolish it becomes part of him. He cannot again be the man who has not made a fool of himself. His misdoing is just as much part of him as his nose or his ears. There is something about him thenceforward that his better nature would be glad to be rid of and cannot.

But of course it would be absurd to suppose that any man could go through life without doing something stupid and perverse sometimes. All that the best of men can hope for is to have at the end a good, solid balance of the things he has done which are not foolishness.

Looking at it one way, life becomes a grand sort of game in which there is an infinity of

chances and an infinity of possibilities of taking the wrong turning ; we have to keep wide-awake to face the chances and mischances and make the best of them ; and to be able to recognise the seductive wrong turnings that lead to quagmires and to decline their alluring falsities. The best we can hope for when the game comes to an end is to feel that we have not been beaten, and that we can say good-bye to the world with the confidence that the number of times we have done the wrong thing does not altogether swamp the number of times we have done the right thing.

The game is infinitely various, for no two people are alike. Some have much harder work than others because they have a more copious outfit of adventurous impulses, more irrepressible curiosity, or more mischievous pugnacity about them. It is getting beaten by stupid and mischievous impulses that wrecks a man's life and prevents its being worth living. The devils that used to be supposed to tempt men are not outside them but inside. All the evil that men do comes from their own impulses. Men do not cheat and lie and deceive and speak evil of their fellows because some pernicious supernatural imp

comes along and invites them to ; but because, in the multitude of impulses which make their temperamental outfit, there is the impulse to cheat and lie and deceive and speak evil; when opportunity offers that impulse carries the day against the impulses which are in consonance with a nobler reasonableness and honesty—and the chance for the nobler impulses becomes weaker every time it happens.

But it must be acknowledged that the people who are endowed with mischievous impulses are much more interesting than the people who are colourless ; and when they do come out the right side they get more out of life than the colourless ones. They get more done. For tempestuous and dangerous impulses are often associated with great force of character. Everything is more strongly accentuated and the dangers are easy to see. The colourless ones have more subtle hidden dangers to cope with. They are colourless because all their impulses have a low level of force ; and they are liable to drift into being next to nothing at all. Negative goodness is not of much account and always tends to be purely futile. There are times when one wishes that colourless people would do something outrageously

bad to vary the monotony. It would at least give us the assurance that there was something inside them.

The colourless good ones have very little chance of making anything definite of their personalities ; and that is a great drawback. The man who is born with decisive impulses has a great advantage in that respect. People can see plainly what he is. The outlines of his spiritual physiognomy are definite. The outlines of the real characters of the colourless ones are vague and difficult to identify. Men distrust their own estimates of them. They persistently think there must be something hidden ; while the more dangerous dispositions make every one see there is something there ; and unless their possessors give up the game and let the lower impulses swamp or crush the higher ones they have the chance of arriving at the crown of life—the establishment of a clear and consistent personality.

A man establishes his definite identity by making consistent and sensible use of such special qualities and aptitudes and impulses as he has. He cannot alter them or pick and choose what he will have, any more than he can pick and choose his parents.



But he can direct them. Whether we are weak or strong, healthy or delicate, gifted or ungifted, each of us has to accept the outfit which has got to serve for the making of a life. As every man's outfit is different from every other man's it is as well to recognise early that each must make the sum total of his life in a different way from other men. That is to say, each man has the supreme opportunity of being something himself, instead of being an ineffectual copy of what he thinks his neighbours are. A man may take pride in having the energy to be self-dependent and definite. Nothing is more likely to make life feel worth living.

But then we have to remember that some very self-dependent people seem to have the gift of making other people's lives not worth living. The capacity for self-dependence does not always go with the mental outfit and judgement which justify it. And that is one of the ways in which a community principle, such as is illustrated in the College, is useful. The community can offer a serviceable check to a nature which is unjustifiably aggressive. One might say that it reduces too salient angles by attrition! At any rate,

the other members of the community can comfort one another when they come into unpleasant contact with the protuberances.

The community feeling checks a fair amount of irresponsibility by the fact that where there are hundreds of different characters there must be an average; and an average has the tendency to become a counterpoise to extreme aberrations. While it helps natures endowed with energy to choose between injurious and helpful impulses, it also infuses some vitality into the colourless ones, and helps them to the best type of character prevailing in the particular community or institution. If that type has been developed by sane and wholesome people it is no small gain that people who would otherwise be quite negative should acquire some kind of definiteness.

The relation of the community principle to individual character is of course a very big and important subject, and we cannot venture to be drawn into it now. But the effect it has, both in awakening life in dull places and in restraining exuberance in dangerous places, is obvious. In the community tradition the lives of those who have belonged to it are of great importance. A life that has been

well lived lives on in the lives of those that come after. No doubt a life being well lived is also a help to others, but one that is complete has something more of sanctity about it; it is complete, rounded off, assured. A living example might disappoint us—we give our admiration with reserve. But with the life that is complete we can—even in sorrow and sympathy—feel glad that it is summed up and that no surprises can tarnish it.

*September 1912.*

## II. ITS INFLUENCE

I CONFESS to a sense of exhilaration whenever I meet with a human life which can be contemplated fully and frankly with the certainty of its true quality being untarnished. It soon mitigates the bitterness of the ending of personal relations. When people have led senseless, silly, unprofitable lives, and come to the end in the hope that some heaven or other will make good their failure here, we have good reason to be sorry. But when a man's life has been really well spent, we can be glad that he had enough time to find out how to make a good

thing of it and spend it with advantage. Every life so spent strengthens the spirit of those who are in contact with it. It is not merely an example which is serviceable for moral purposes. Devotion is contagious. When you are constantly in touch with some one who is doing what he has got to do with all his might, never shuffling nor shirking, you can hardly help doing the same. It sets up a sort of standard which one is ashamed to fall below.

The effect is very different from that produced by moral examples, because it is produced by actual living contact and by the effect of a real human relation between one person and another. As a rule, people who are held up as moral examples of exemplary living set up a perverse impulse to rebel and to criticise in those to whom they are recommended, especially if the latter have any independent spirit. They are only too pleased to be able to persuade themselves that such examples are humbugs or prigs. The impulse in people of spirit to develop their lives in their own way, which is the source of individuality, gives them a distaste for virtues that are recommended on the basis of moral example.

They are even sometimes driven into mischief by the unpalatable form in which virtues are presented to them ; and it is not so much their fault as the fault of the uninspiring and unconvincing manner in which the people who recommend them present the examples of virtuous action.

To be genuinely and effectually impressed by any man one needs to know him in his entirety, with all his weaknesses or perversities or inevitable difficulties of disposition, and to have an adequate opportunity to see how he contended with such drawbacks and maintained the general tenor of an honourable and helpful life in spite of them. Shining virtuous actions may be tokens of a sound and generous disposition, but they are not the things which other people can endeavour to emulate with success, because the exact conditions will not be so obliging as to recur.

It is the general spirit of a man's life that is important, not the incidents. What may be heroic in one situation may be the very reverse in another. The unintelligent creature who tries to do what some saintly person has been reported to do, because he was told some saintly person did it, is merely a

futile nonentity. He is not doing it because it is his nature so to do, or for any genuine or fine impulse, but too often because it feeds his self-complacency; or because he hopes for pats on the back from his guides and spiritual advisers, who understand the deeper aspects of life as little as he does.

Individual virtuous actions are indeed the accidents and superfluities of a life which is running clear and clean below them. If people are to be made high-minded, generous, energetic, single-hearted, and honourable, it seems best to keep these concrete individual actions in the background. Concrete illustrations are always liable to be exasperating. Every human being has to be virtuous after his own fashion. No two men have the same temptations, no two men's relations with other men are the same. The proportion of primitive instinct which leads men astray to the intelligence and understanding which might keep them straight, is never the same in any two human beings whatever. They are so differently apportioned to different individuals that what we regard as a surprising piece of unexpected decency in one man we should regard as rather degrading

in another, and as below what we should have expected of him. It is the knowledge we get by experience which enables us to gauge our fellow-men in such respects, and to see in what particular direction they have difficulties to contend with in themselves; and our estimate of their worth depends on the extent to which they persistently endeavour to get the better of their mischievous impulses. We often love people who are full of faults when we see they determine not to be beaten by them, and occasionally startle us by some generous and unselfish thought or action; and we love much less a man whose outfit of temptations is not so plentiful, but who cynically and often consciously yields to them on every provocation. We can even honour the former and feel that the sum total of him inspires us, while the latter only makes us shudder and avoid him.

It is often the drawback of people who are offered to us as examples that we become oppressed by their virtues. The people who recommend them often think that any betrayal of the other side of their history will weaken the impression they want to make. And they are obviously wrong. It is the whole

man we want to know and not only the shining part of him ; and then we can honour him and learn from his story with confidence.

But on the other hand there are men whose steadfastness and devotion we can honour without stint as they are shown by the general sense of their careers. Such qualities are of general application, and bear fruit in helping other men to live up to a like honourable standard in things that fit their diverse lines of life, and spread an atmosphere of good sense and open-mindedness which keeps whole groups of human beings in healthy spiritual condition.

We have been fortunate in having many such people at the College among the professors and teachers, and among the office staff, and among the pupils ; and though as time passes by many of them are gathered by the reaper or pass out of our immediate ken, I believe there are still many among us yet, and for all I can see, the average condition of the spiritual atmosphere is hopeful. I say hopeful, because no one can quite gauge the caprices of the human mind or forecast with certainty the strange eddies which affect the moods and attitudes of mind of large groups



of human beings. The best-constituted schemes can be upset by some incalculable and apparently trifling trend of perversity.

The progress of a healthy organisation may be turned into some unprofitable channel by a flaw of unfavourable wind which no one could have anticipated. At no time and under no conditions is any human organisation settled and absolutely safe. We can never sit down and take things easy with the idea that we need not be always exerting ourselves to keep things alive and healthy. Change is the one thing that is always inevitable, and if change is not watched, things can easily change downwards. But on the other hand it is change which makes things interesting. Directly people lapse into ruts and mechanical habits and do not keep vigorously alive interest flags.

Moreover, one needs to watch things from many points of view to approximate to constant safety. It is as well to remember that things do not look the same when you are a little way off as they do when you are in the middle of them. I do not know if you have ever seen a first-rate painter at work on a big picture and have noticed, when he has been

working away for a long time with his brushes with his nose close to the canvas, how he will now and then draw his head away and try to get a more comprehensive view of what he has been doing, and even at times walk all about his studio to get his work from many points of view.

It is a very useful thing to do whatever you are engaged upon—whether it is that you are learning some difficult new work and concentrating your mind upon details, or whether you are composing some colossal masterpiece and have been a good deal occupied with the details of a second-horn part or the accidentals in a remote modulation. The people who hear your performance or your composition will not be so deeply conscious of the details as of the impression which the whole or its more spacious parts make upon them ; and it is as well at times to try to get something of the same view yourselves. It is always useful to get some one else's point of view of anything we are doing.

Too close a point of view is always deceptive. We magnify the value of small excellences, of the little things which appeal to us personally from habit and familiarity, or because we pride ourselves individually that

such little details have been successfully done. People who belong to a place like the College are liable to see its qualities too much from the inside, from the point of view of their daily experiences, and it is very difficult to see it as it appears from a wider point of view. And, moreover, it is worth remembering that when we compare it with other institutions of like kind we are doing it on a fallacious basis ; for we judge our own interests at close quarters, and the institutions we compare them with from a different point of view ; that is, from a good way off.

There are hardly any things that any man can do which are not capable of being made to look ugly or beautiful by the interpretation that is put on them. The most transparent devotion can be made to look mean and sordid, and the fruit of some ignoble motive ; and the crookedest scheming can be made to look heroic.

Some people attribute divine motives to everything that people do who are allied with or associated with themselves ; and wickedness and dishonesty to everything that is done by the folks who are supposed to be on the other side. The most obvious illustrations are of

course in politics, where we see that when anything is done on one side it is all that it should be to the people on the same side, but if done by any one on the other side, the whole nation is invited to explode in virtuous fury and loathing at its vileness. But the same absurdity happens in small things as well as in great ; and all the while it is not a proof of wilful dishonesty or falseness, but merely of short-sightedness and lack of understanding. The person who is most likely to be right is the one who looks for the best motive that can explain even an apparently base action.

People say overmuch trustfulness is liable to be abused ; and it must be confessed that there are occasions when men who have misconceived their place in the world and have become mischievous, must meet with direct and unfriendly language. But all the same, the world and the people that live in it get on better if they are dealt with in a spirit of goodwill. Men sometimes become hopelessly vicious and impracticable because they do not find any encouragement to be otherwise. If a man's impulses are ever so perverse it is always conceivable that he may act rightly if he finds some one expects him to. A big

institution, like an individual, can have an air of frankness and generosity. In the first place, it is a sign of health ; and in the second, it is a proof of capacity to see the true merit of things that are well done apart from self-interest. To fight for one's own hand because it is to one's apparent interest is getting quite out-of-date and old-fashioned.

Yet in these days when men are abandoning all the ancient standards under the impression that they are mere formalities and barren dogmas, it becomes more and more difficult to discern what is grounded on honest intention. There are so many who are crying out ceaselessly that their new way is the only way ; and we guess from their overmuch protesting that it is nothing of the sort. Yet we can afford to be patient, for we know that if it is imposture the world will in due time find it out. The many who are swayed hither and thither by novel sensations and noisy advertisement are unstable, and soon forget the subjects of their own fervent worship ; while the few who understand are steadfast and keep to what they know is good, and win the day in the end.

Nature is proverbially wasteful, and a vast

amount of energy is always being expended on things that are destined to futility. But after all, it is better to be ardent and eager than merely conventional. Discoveries are sometimes made by men who seem to the world in general to be taking altogether the wrong road. The finer temperaments and the natures full of vitality must always press on. It is when they are not imbued with the essence of live tradition that they go astray, and this they may do through lack of opportunity as well as through lack of will. But even then there is more hope of getting something out of their vagaries than is to be got out of the barren complacency of those who are wedded to ease and comfort, and to the old wives' tales that have ceased to be true as men move onwards to explore and take possession of new spheres of thought and imagination.

There is never much likelihood of the best results from people who think too well of themselves; but there are always good hopes of the highest from such as are generously open-minded to other people's labours and achievements.

*September 1913.*

## THE WINDOWS OF LIFE

FROM the look of you, one would guess that you have been enjoying the customary Christmas weather; and it seems to have agreed with you. Very likely the fact of its being Christmas had something to do with it. When people make up their minds to be cheerful whatever happens, it does not make much difference whether it is rain or fine. I suppose we should all like to have skated or slid and thrown snowballs at one another's heads as our forefathers did, but as we could not, we found some other ways of enjoying life. It is a pity we cannot apply the same principle more often. If we had a sort of Christmas every week, that pledged us to find pleasure in whatever there came in our way to do, we should make much more serviceable things of our lives. The wonderful effect that Christmas produces in us is less owing to

turkeys and mince pies, and plum puddings and crackers, than to making up our minds to be merry and keen whatever comes. And the result is that we get much more pleasure out of things because we throw ourselves more into them, and are interested even in our fun.

At the bottom of enjoying things is getting some way to be really interested in them—because being interested wakes up our instincts. Getting interested is just the reverse of what careless people think. It is not mere intellectual pleasure that we get, such as the careless person despises as priggish, but the opening it makes for the play of primitive and universal instincts—curiosity, the overcoming of difficulties, the masterful impulses, mischief, human feeling, sympathy. People are thrilled through their minds.

We can always be keen about doing things that are our special business. Being participators in activities of all sorts is the keenest pleasure, especially if we participate well. But a very great part of our lives is necessarily spent in looking on, and that is more difficult to provide for. It is a very inferior sort of pleasure to the active mind. But even such an inferior occupation as looking on has its



ways of being applied successfully. We cannot begin with doing things ; we must look on for a while to learn how to do them. And there are many different ways of looking on. We are aware mainly of two ways of doing it. Some people do really look on and take part mentally in whatever is going on ; and other people are always thinking about something else. You have it clearly illustrated in the attendances at cricket matches which are fashionable. There are some people whose eyes are glued to the cricketers, and who cannot bear to be distracted by irrelevant remarks. They understand the points of the game, applaud a good stroke with pleasure, and grunt displeasure at a bad one.

There are a good many of another sort, who do not concern themselves with the cricket at all, but only look at one another's hats and dresses, and discuss what they have to eat and drink, and the people they saw at the last fashionable party they attended. The people who have been really looking on at the cricket have added to their capacity for enjoying cricket. They have sharpened their wits and know more about it, and will enjoy the next chance of looking on at a first-rate match all

the more. While those who have not been doing what they pretended to come for are just where they were, and will only go over the same ground when they go to another cricket match ; or even when they go to something else, such as an opera, where they do not attend to the opera at all, but discuss their tiaras and other decorations, and vie with one another in irrelevant futilities.

There is obviously a sensible way of looking on and a non-sensible way. There is a way of attending keenly to what you are doing or looking on at, and a way of missing the kernel of it altogether, and thinking about something else. It is not helpful merely to say that people whose chief interests are their hats and frocks never could take sensible interest in anything. People are generally silly out of mere dishevelment of mind. They are inattentive by nature, and for lack of a little spirit and energy they are always distracted from the matter in hand. People who are easily distracted in one thing are easily distracted in another ; and the result is they never get good solid enjoyment out of anything.

Most people can enjoy looking on at anything if they can only get a point of view which

gives them a hold on it. That is getting in a sense an interest in it. People sometimes fail to get into touch with a thing because in vulgar parlance it is not the thing to do. In some grades of society it is not the thing to be seen carrying a brown paper parcel in the street, in others it is not the thing to be seen travelling first-class, and in some it would be felt to be a loss of caste to be seen on an omnibus or in a four-wheeler. All these conventional privations take their revenges, as they do in more important things. Those of us who have had much to do with music in this country in the past forty years or so have had plenty of occasion to observe the effects of such conventions. With certain types of English people music was till recently a thing people who respected themselves thought beneath serious consideration. When it was going on, especially if it was good music, they always talked at the tops of their voices; and the natural result was that they knew nothing about it, and were quite incapable of enjoying any but the very worst, stupidest and vulgarest kinds. They liked what was stupid and vulgar, and things which were devoid of any artistic merit or feeling whatever, because

they had no intelligence in connection with better things. The language was to them an unknown tongue. The same result obtains with everything we come across ; whether it is convention that prevents our giving our minds to it or our own indifference. We can enjoy all sorts of things if we give our minds to them a little and look on in a sensible way. And looking on stupidly makes us liable to be taken in by twaddle and vulgarity and ineptitude, because such things as we do not give our minds to are out of the circuit of our understanding.

An enormous waste of life comes about from our not taking our opportunities to see into things that come in our way. People take to spending their lives in such unprofitable futilities as card-playing, and even worse, because they have not had energy enough to look sensibly at the thousands of things that happen around them every day. The man who has any sense tries to find a way of getting into touch with the things that offer themselves. That is not to say that he need be looking for things to take interest in. Man's life is so devised that the things he comes across are for the most part within the circuit which

concerns his life ; and there is always plenty of variety at hand, without hunting about for it, and getting dissipated and incapable of prolonged attention.

There are many thousands of windows out of which we can look upon life. The great point is to see something out of each window which can best be seen from that particular window. The trouble with the feeble people who will always be looking at one another's hats and frocks wherever they are, is that they are always looking at the same things ; like the wealthy travellers, who, when they arrive at some fantastically interesting place, Cairo, or Rome, or Tokyo, start off at once to find out if any people they know are there, and then arrange for the same routine of luncheons and five o'clock teas as if they were at home. The difference in the window they are looking out of at any moment makes no difference to their experiences. They do not add to the range of their enjoyments in life, but always keep within the same narrow circuit. They look out of a window which might give them a larger view of life and a wider experience, and they see nothing out of it at all. The other kind of people can widen

the scope of their lives wherever they are, however slight and insignificant the thing is they have to look at.

And there is another point worth considering. Every one knows that the sort of people who cannot apply their minds to diverse things and cannot occupy themselves with more than one or two trivialities, are always getting bored. The things that can keep them feeling alive are so few. There is no denying that the most sensible man can be bored at times. He can be bored by the insufferable twaddle empty-headed idiots inflict upon him. He can be bored by a stupid address or lecture, or by dull, stupid, pointless music or poetry. But he is much less likely to be bored than the man or woman whose mind is limited to a very few ways of looking at things. His boredom is often simple weariness. If he were feeling fit and had full command of himself, he might ward off boredom by trying to make out how the man who bored him came to be such a tiresome idiot, why the paltry music or poetry came to be such twaddle, or even how it came to exist at all. Indeed, as long as a sensible man is master of himself, there are few things out of which he could not extract entertainment

or profit, and so keep the deadly boredom at bay.

We can always get pleasure out of a thing if we look for something in it. Even if we do not find what we are looking for, we may find something else which is better worth finding, and if we do not find anything at all there will at least have been the amusement of looking for it. Different occupations and different kinds of work and play exercise different muscles of the mind and group the mental faculties differently in exercise; just as different games and different kinds of manual work exercise different muscles of the body.

And this brings us to the point that specialists who have their hearts and minds engrossed in their special subjects are liable to fall into a relatively similar position to that of the people whose interests are centred in hats and frocks. They are liable to get their outlook on life narrowed to the little circuit of their special subject. A specialist is liable to see all life out of one window, and not to know what it looks like out of another window. He may know his own subject all right, but when he comes across a man who is equally engrossed in another special subject, the two

are mutually unintelligible. If a hemmed-in specialist in music finds himself sitting at dinner between an equally absorbed entomologist on one side and an equally absorbed conchologist on the other, what sort of intercourse do you think he is going to get with them? They mutually lack appreciation of one another's work, and as nothing seems worth talking about but their own subject, they have no common ground for mutual interchange of ideas.

The hemmed-in specialist does not see his subject in relation to other subjects, or to the manifold phases of human life, but merely the relations of its parts to one another. His humanity is stunted, and his work becomes stodgy. Moreover, nothing is more certain than the fact that a man can never know his own subject thoroughly till he feels its relation to other things. When you have time and opportunity to consider such matters, you will find that all great specialists, whether in branches of science, law or art, are men who take keen interest in other things besides their special subject. It enables them to take a broader view of their own subject; to place it in relation to other subjects and to the world



in general. It makes them more supplemented, and their variety of interests affords relief and rest and change when they need it, without their having to resort to the purely comatose condition of resting by doing nothing.

All this applies very strongly to most of you, because you are destined by the laws of your nature to be specialists. Some of you are so wrapped in your special subject that you almost resent anything which keeps you away from it. But there is often a curious compensation in cases of devotion to an art, that the keenness about it is part of a general keenness. Sometimes the readiness to be keen is even dangerous, especially with those who have various aptitudes.

This brings us into the neighbourhood of the objections commonly urged against people's diffusing their interests; which are that it leads to desultoriness and dilettantism. Desultoriness and dilettantism generally come from a peculiar and unfortunate type of mind—the type of mind that cannot concentrate or keep to anything for any length of time—the type of mind that soon gets tired—the type of mind that wants snippets and snacks, and flits about from one thing to another, and cannot settle

decisively on anything. The course I advocate is calculated to correct such weaknesses ; as it does not advise going in search of distractions and amusements merely for the sake of change and difference ; but to take the differences that present themselves and make the best use of them.

The best use is always to enlarge our powers of realising things, even when they are quite ordinary everyday happenings ; such as must happen even to the most devoted specialist. The more devoted and absorbed a specialist is, the more serviceable is it to get into touch with all sorts of things and fill his life with more opportunities. Your holiday papers often give me lights on these points. It is very pleasant to find so many of the writers appreciating poetry, and even remembering passages which were apt to the experiences they have met with and the situations they found themselves in. But another thing which has often struck me in the holiday papers is that most of those who come to the front musically are keenest about their experiences outside music. Those who are most prominent in their own art generally have seemed in the holiday papers to be

entering into life's experiences with more zest than those who plod along with their music and only make a commonplace result with the most meritorious devotion to work.

We all know how much personality counts in an art, and how essential it is. It is essential to develop our own individual views of the artistic products we have to deal with. No doubt a commonplace mind is difficult to make uncommonplace ; but there is no likelier way to achieve it and attain personality than to develop capacity to take vigorous pleasure in all manner of things. People who devote themselves to an art need to see life through as many windows as they can. It gives them more understanding of the various people they have to offer their art to, and how different minds can be appealed to. It broadens their field of operations, and helps them to see their art whole instead of in disconnected fragments. It gives them a stronger and better hold of the world they have to live in. It makes them modest, because it enables them to realise that their art is only one among many thousands of subjects to which men may serviceably and justly devote their lives; and it relieves them of shyness, because it puts them on a

better footing with those who are occupied with other subjects.

Some people are keen by nature, and keenness is one of the most fortunate gifts a man can possess—ininitely more fortunate than the inheritance of untold millions, which, by the same token, are generally unmanageable millstones. Keeness makes life worth living, and millions choke it. Those who have not either, will find it much more serviceable to try to develop the former than to waste their energies in trying to accumulate the latter. Keeness in general helps to the attainment of adequate returns in the shape of the necessities of livelihood. But over-eagerness for returns in themselves only deadens the general keenness for things that are much more worth having.

If we look at the matter from the most spacious point of view, we shall find occasion to observe also that among the tendencies of these days against which we need most constantly to find a safeguard, is the tendency to concentrate on mere details and to be overwhelmed by them, and to lose the power and the will to see things whole. The advent of the working classes into daylight, and their participation in the highest interests of the

mind, such as art, is much to be welcomed ; but it brings with it the attitude of minds which are driven to concentrate on details and to judge things too much by them. They are most apt to be taken in by conjuring tricks and accessories, and to miss the wider meanings of things.

Moreover, all theoretic teaching and analysis drives the mind towards detail in proportion as the analysis becomes more searching and comprehensive. Men's noses are kept so close to the objects of attention that they are hardly aware they exist in their wider aspects. The pitfall of teachers is that they are impelled to drive the taught to lose sight of the larger spaces in arduous attention to the minutiae. They have to discuss Bach and Beethoven, and even the speculative experiments of those who maintain that people are going to appreciate their works when we are all dead and buried, as if they were made up of a lot of bars, or even beats, and the way the bars and beats formed connected wholes did not matter. They drive men to forget that the essential of a work of art is to be something that is whole, and that a man cannot be worthy of a real work of art till he realises

it as a whole and in its widest aspects. It is not by picking out a pretty phrase or an interesting progression here and there, that a man shows appreciation of a work of art, but by his realisation of the way the thing comes to be a complete whole.

As with a work of art, so with a special subject as a whole. The only way is to get far enough away from it at times to see it in its completeness. And that is mainly attainable by getting into touch with other fields of human activity, and seeing one's own subject from the point of view of those who are occupied with something else.

Your musical art is in itself but a detail in the vast infinity of possible forms of mental and spiritual activity. If you want to expand your mind and your life to the utmost, the likeliest way is to realise the relation of your art to some of these other things. And you can only do that by knowing something about them. There is no need to set solemnly to work to study entomology or conchology or any other "ology": the Christmas attitude of mind which is keen to enter into the things that come your way will do it for you.

*January 1913.*

## THE ENGLISH ATTITUDE TOWARDS ART

THE surest mark of intelligent and sensible people is stability of opinion. And stability of opinion is only achieved in the first place by keeping at bay the personal influences which interfere with right judgement. Most of you know, even with short experience of life, that in some countries they are always changing their governments, and people are always quarrelling and disputing and making a miserable failure of public affairs. It is mainly because they allow all sorts of personal and irrelevant considerations to pervert their judgement on wider issues ; because their mental vision is limited, and they are incapable of judging sanely where a wider range of considerations than everyday interests of home and acquaintances is concerned.

You can take a homely parallel. What

would you think if in the College the scholarships and exhibitions were not awarded to the pupils who are most gifted or most efficient, but to those who could get the backing of dukes and marquises and millionaires, and people who are familiarly described as influential ; or if the parents of candidates for certificates of Associateship had to go round and pull wires and interview officials and cajole examiners to get their children passed ? Yet such things used to happen in this country and still happen in other countries.

People with undeveloped minds fail to see that the interests of a community include the interests of the individuals which constitute it. It is obviously to the interest of the community that if some one is to fill a position which requires special capacities the person that has those capacities shall be chosen ; that if somebody is to be educated or financed because his gifts are likely to be of service to the world, that person shall be selected who is most gifted and most fit, and not merely one in whose favour influential people exercise their persuasions. It is mere low dishonesty to try to get a person chosen on grounds which are not relevant. It is mere cheating



to try to obtain through influence without ability what is meant for people of special ability. The people of ability are defrauded, the community is defrauded, and the person who defrauds is denuded of the rags of his honour.

But the undeveloped mind cannot see it ; and when there is anything going, as the commercial world says, it thinks that every kind of pressure should be put on to get it. And in some quarters unscrupulous, blind intrigue is more successful from this selfish point of view than honesty. Aberrations of this kind used to go on in this country, and still go on in some unfortunate countries, with consequences which you frequently hear of—and affairs sometimes arrive at free shooting all round, revolutions, uprisings, and even the hideous scenes of promiscuous murder which are enacted under the name of war.

Our comparative freedom from such things in this country is to a great extent owing to our having realised early that justice to small as well as great cannot be provided for unless private opinions on public affairs are widely allowed to carry weight. In the first instance I think this was owing to the fact that the

inhabitants of our little islands have, from quite early times, refused to be put upon; and having forcibly resisted disregard of justice even in the smallest things, found that they had to think more widely in relation to public affairs. They found themselves unconsciously in the position of having to extend the scope of their sense of relations. That is to say, the individual learnt to consider his own apparent personal interests in relation to the interests of his family; his family interests in relation to the interests of his class or town or locality; and the interests of his class or locality in its relation to the interests of his country at large. And the extension of his point of view conduced to stability.

But when men think of things in such wide combinations of relations they have to go slow, and they have to criticise and reconsider. The higher attitude of mind makes this inevitable. So it is with the inhabitants of our islands. It is one of their quaintest qualities that they are always criticising themselves. Among the criticisms one of the most familiar is that we are too staid and decorous and self-repressed—that we do not have feelings, are devoid of imagination, commonplace and dull.

To people of fervid and impatient temper, who are always in ecstasies and constantly indulging their promiscuous and ill-regulated instincts, we must naturally be an annoying people. It is perfectly true that we do set immense store by self-control, self-containment, self-mastery, even — if you will — by caution, in accepting the grounds of action. And it is a mercy we do. Unless people have an unnatural quickness for estimating the values of facts which bear upon a question, to act in a hurry is in most cases to act wrongly.

It is the English people's habit to weigh things and to hold back and avoid rushing into action under misleading influences. It is their habit to try to avoid being beguiled by a specious, plausible, seductive exterior, and to look into the insides of things and see what they are made of before either going into transports of enthusiasm for pasteboard and tinsel, or into rabid fury with a thing which is genuine, but requires a little exercise of patience and energy to appreciate. Of course it is not to be supposed that some of us are not sometimes beguiled into misplaced impetuosity of feeling, but the attitude of mind which

deliberates certainly prevails and affects our conduct and our achievements.

A Frenchman who wrote a book on English methods of rule in India said : "The English are just but not amiable." He was looking at us from a different stratum of thought from ours. If it were a question of appearance of amiability as against the likelihood of being unjust through being in too much haste, we should be quite content with the Frenchman's opinion. To be patiently just is much more amiable in a finer sense than to be carried away by picturesque gusts of impulse. The Frenchman likes the appearance of doing a thing with ease, with all the graces of style, and he gets brilliant results in the way that suits him. The English are content to plod along so long as they can ultimately get where they want to be.

But all habits of mind and all qualities have their defects as well as their merits. Our habit of reserve and self-containment is a drawback sometimes. It gets overdone and becomes mere lifelessness. It is too often a serious hindrance in our art. Self-repression makes us wooden. It prevents our performers from getting into the heart of

things, when it should by rights do just the reverse. They get into the habit of thinking too much of the letter, and what they consider the orthodox readings; or of the interpretations supposed to be sanctified by the concurrence or usage of the most celebrated musicians of the past, and they miss the spirit. They seem to be repeating lessons and never getting themselves expressed in what they do. They get bored and jaded before they have got through the difficulties of the letter into the spirit.

If a man is to play from his soul, he must get what he has to play into his soul first. I recognise the inevitable suggestion that there are such a lot of things that people have to play which they do not want to let into their souls at all—and that no one of any sense would want them to. But this is a by-lane, and we must pass it by for the present.

In relation to our art our English attitude of mind need only be a hindrance to second-rate and unstrenuous types of performers—the sort of people who have not the tenacity to assimilate a work of art, and want to perform it before they know what it is they have to perform. Such people risk making fools of

themselves when they give themselves away ; so perhaps it is as well they should confine themselves to reproducing the mere letter. But those who have really got the things into their souls can give themselves away without stint.

Some people have souls that are quickly receptive, and they make a great show in the world. But if quickness is the thing they rejoice in most, they can never stay long in one mind, but must always be looking for something new to exercise their quickness upon. They get into the habit of being inconstant. Without doubt they often show some of the qualities of genius, and give delight to people who are of like nature with themselves. But such a course is much better suited to people of other races, who habitually practise guesswork, and love the risks and uncertainties it entails. Such guesswork, with our lack of practice, too often lands us in vulgarity, pretence, blatancy, dishonesty, even in some quarters in uncleanness, which is strangely at variance with the scheme of life we have worked out for ourselves. People who have intensity enough to try to get things into their souls in their fullest significance

know that it entails risks. For when things have really got into people's souls they have a tendency to stick. So a person of any mental elevation goes warily when there is a question of making something a part of himself. But such an attitude need not in the least impair our self-dependence and independence, which are of such infinite importance in interpretation. It was the intrinsic independence of the race which originated our attitude of mind, and if we can only wait a little and sustain the freshness of our impulses till we have got complete hold of a thing, we can be just as fervent and devoted as the members of races who set so much store by what they miscall spontaneity.

The value of steadfastness of opinion of course depends upon the opinion being more or less right—or at all events right in direction. Truths are all single, however many facets they may have; and the nearer men are to them the less likely are they to be frequently changing about and at variance with one another. It is only when they are completely at sea that they are constantly advocating some new nostrum or new theory. It is the people who do not understand anything who have

always got some new short cut to solve all the problems of humanity. There is no limit to the number of things that are not true, or the capacity of human kind to be gulled by the speciousness of advertisers and humbugs, and to take up with them merely because they seem to be new.

But on the other hand there is a pathetic fact which has to be kept in mind—that when people set their faces sturdily against being seduced by the wiles of false prophets, they frequently steel themselves against the true ones also. On the whole it is worth while. Every attitude of mind has its drawbacks. It is the margin of the delicate adjustment in the balance of advantages between one course and another which has to be weighed; and the right estimate is only found when many minds of different calibres address themselves keenly to the questions that have to be solved—and the concurrence of many minds becomes more and more necessary as life gets more complex.

The conclusion of it all is that the line we have taken as a race is to weigh well and get at the true meaning of things, and not to be misled by worldly interests and conveniences—and to recognise that the true interests



of the individual are included in the interests of the community. It is not to be pretended that this is the only way of doing things, but the attitude of mind implies the admission of our inherent racial weaknesses and makes some provision for accommodating them. And human nature not being either perfect or "desperately wicked," steadfastness of direction can probably be best secured in that way.

*May 1913.*

## ASPIRATIONS

I MADE up my mind when I began to try to think of things I might talk about this morning that at all events I would not talk about the war. It is quite possible that such a decision may be annoying to some people, and anxious friends might warn me that I should fall just into that very misfortune I always dread most and preach a sermon, as that is the likeliest result of refusing to discuss things in which people are really interested.

But one thing in which sermons often differ from these addresses is that it is so often the duty of preachers to remind us that we are "miserable sinners." I hardly ever have occasion to remind you that you are "sinners," and if I called you "miserable" it would appear too obvious a form of humour. Preachers have the justification that people are constantly describing themselves as "miserable

sinner"; and this frequency of reiteration seems to suggest that there must be something in it which it is worth while to search for.

No doubt the confession is very often what is called academic, or perfunctory, and does not appear to induce much depression. It is said because it is printed in a book to be said, and it serves useful as well as beneficent purposes. It might be said, for instance, to be of service to an unscrupulous business man, who cheats and tricks his fellow-men all the week, and sets Sunday apart to conform to the usual regulations of respectable society, and recommences his usual round of roguery on Monday. If he did not set Sunday apart for the admission of his sinfulness and to listen to a sermon endorsing the admission, he would probably be engaged in roguery seven days a week instead of six.

But there is a very different side to the matter. For there are a great many devout and lovable people to whom it is an ecstasy to repeat the same words that have been repeated through the centuries by devout people like themselves, and to feel the thrill of abasement and humility, and the reverence it implies for some great ideal they worship and

long for. They may be some of the best and purest people in the world, but they always long for something higher and more perfect. They long to be in some more perfect accord with an ideal of sinlessness of which even they cannot formulate the lineaments. Their expression of "miserable sinfulness" is indeed figurative. They are miserable in a sense because they seem to themselves to fall short of an ideal which they cannot define. They are sinners because according to the theory they have accepted all men are necessarily sinners. It is all a question of degree. The man who has arrived almost as near perfection as is possible for a human being still aspires. It is the fruit of his aspiration that he is so near perfection.

It might be counted unto him for a small blemish on an almost untarnished record that he seems to over-emphasise his being so miserable. He really is not miserable at all, but he has to express himself so because it is necessary to formulate the words in such a way as can be uttered by a great number of people all at once. In certain combined acts of worship it is inevitable that the individual should be merged in the crowd. When a

vast number of people of all sorts of different grades of sinfulness have to participate in expressions of contrition or abasement the actual words have to be accepted as figurative—for they cannot be exactly true of every one. And it may be taken as a general rule that those who feel the words most are those who have the least sinfulness about them; and those who merely reiterate them as a meaningless formula are the most vicious and frivolous and self-indulgent and unscrupulous. The lowest natures are just those who are contented to be low, and the highest are those who are never satisfied even when they bump their heads against the divine stars.

As a matter of fact all human beings aspire, only they differ a great deal in what they aspire for. The crafty business man, to whom I have referred above, aspires without ceasing to increase his possessions. He aspires to arrive at the position in which he expects to be gazed at with envy and admiration by the vast majority of his fellow-men. He assumes that they all have the same stupefying ideals as he has and will honour him for what he has instead of what he is and does. He aspires so much that nothing satisfies him, even if he

becomes a multi-millionaire and gets a peerage. He probably is never so happy again as when he was an errand boy or a ragged urchin in the streets. He never can be satisfied, because the more he succeeds the more he chokes his mind by the mass of lumber he piles on the top of it. The contrast between him and the nobler kind of aspirer is that the spirit of the latter always grows larger and more radiant, and the spirit of the worshipper of self always grows narrower and more rayless.

People have aspirations according to their conditions. Members of every class aspire to reach the class immediately above them. They pathetically ape their manners and fashions. They have little opportunity to judge better. It is the main thing which lies obviously before them as an aim. A parson aspires to be a canon or a dean or a bishop; the usher in a school aspires to be a headmaster; the grocer's assistant aspires to be a grocer; the lawyer aspires to be a judge, or, even further on, to be a member of Parliament; the subaltern aspires to be a brigadier; the "middy" to be commander, or, still in the distant heights, an admiral; the man with active social instincts hopes, like those a step

higher, to see his name in smart society paragraphs ; the footman to be a butler.

The aspirations generally seem to follow the obvious line belonging to their social position and circumstances ; and there is something pathetic about it, because the gain is often no gain at all, and when it is a gain it is so pitifully small.

Yet this instinct of aspiration is one of the most serviceable things humanity possesses. It is one of the original essential instincts, through which it has climbed out of the original slough of savagery. It is only lack of enlightenment and understanding which makes it so often futile. It is when it is expended on the things which are merely conventional and obvious that it is so ineffectual. Without understanding, even so honourable and serviceable a quality is but half effective.

Yet there is plenty of impulse in men to aspire after what is not obvious. The most vigorous and enterprising minds always have aspirations which seem to have nothing to do with their normal occupation ; and sometimes these are very quaint and curious. A great novelist aspires to be celebrated as a sportsman, a great chemist aspires to be a composer, a

brilliant composer aspires for fame in the world of books, a great statesman aspires to be a philosopher, a distinguished government official aspires to be a clarinettist. It often happens that a man is more proud of some infantile attempt to do something for which he has no gift than of all his achievements in regions where his powers and mastery are acknowledged to be supreme. It is a sort of unconscious protest against being shut up in one little corner.

The aspirations which mark more generous and vigorous natures are always towards things that are not obvious, and that is because all generous dispositions rebel against the liability to be made specialists. The rebellion of youthful minds against education is generally misunderstood. It is not rebellion against education but against the way it is administered. Every human being is bound to protest against being cabined, cribbed, confined to one special subject, and being shut off from any understanding of the great world outside it. As the tendency of most professional education is inevitably to specialise and to tie a man down to some miserable little detail in life, it is a mercy that there is an



instinctive impulse in man to oppose it, even if it does it in a very clumsy way, which lends itself to being misunderstood.

One of the most difficult problems which humanity has to face in the immediate future is how to prevent the "division of labour," which is inevitable for efficient and rapid production, causing specialisation which will narrow the mind of the workers to their own infinitely insignificant detail of work, and completely stunt their understanding any great and important questions of the world and the well-being of the people in it, and man's spiritual needs. Apart even from things of wider significance there can be but few jobs so trivial and mechanical that they will not be done better if a man knows and understands some things outside them. When a man has to spend his whole life fitting pins' heads on to the shafts of pins, the blatant profit-monger will say his having any mind outside pinheads will not enable him to fit more pinheads or fit them better. But the man has to live somewhere: he ought to be able to have a wife and family, he ought to have the chance to develop enough understanding to keep him from drinking and debauching all his wages

and making his home life so utterly squalid and miserable that his health and spirit are both broken, and he becomes incapable of doing even his pitifully trivial work well enough to earn starvation wages.

As the world gets older it becomes even more indispensable to have a wider and more sympathetic outlook; we all know that. Yet the ever-increasing call for mere efficiency works absolutely in the opposite direction. All things in the universe are so intimately connected with one another that it is not possible to separate absolutely one line of activity or thought from another. The hide-bound specialist, who concentrates his whole being on his own subject, is missing a lot of things which must bear on his subject. He misses altogether the relation of his own subject to others. He misses altogether the sense of his own personal relation to the rest of the "miserable sinners" who are engrossed in their own special subjects. He becomes one of those I referred to above, whose aspirations being satisfied by the daily round of obvious activities, never get to the thrill of real achievement. Everything he does is wanting in something. His life is incomplete.

The moral of it all is that most of man's serviceable aspirations are outside his normal and obvious occupations. They are the aspirations which raise his normal activities above the range of the purely mechanical. They are the things which give a generous air to what a man achieves. In these days of furious competition in exactitude, people protest against any distraction; against any attention being given to anything but a special subject. Their argument is specious. We agree with them in their contentions as far as they go. Mere dissipation of energy is completely futile. It is deplorable when a man has so little power of coherence and concentration that at one moment he is studying geology, the next painting in water colours, and the next listening eagerly to the theories of a fad doctor, and the next practising a mouth-organ, and the next studying the pedigrees of race-horses, and the next becoming a faith healer, and so on *ad infinitum*.

But such futility is not the result of generous aspiration but of personal deficiencies. Such a man would be best tied down with his nose against some durable grindstone; otherwise he would never understand

even the paltriest of subjects. One must distinguish between incapacity of attention and lively interests in many aspects of life and the universe. Mere incapacity of attention is the result of mental and temperamental feebleness. It shows itself in hopeless inconsequence and incoherence. The so-called butterfly existence, which is often thought so pretty by half-witted people, is all very well for butterflies, but for human kind it is unutterably stupid. It produces neither happiness for the human butterfly nor profit for those with whom he associates.

When any one of sense advocates the direction of aspiration towards things outside a special subject, he means subjects which are coherent—subjects which throw light on one another ; subjects which enhance the range of mind ; subjects which minister to the development of personality ; subjects, finally, which minister to the development of character and judgement.

Education has two very distinct objects, which are of pre-eminent urgency. There is on the one hand the urgency of efficiency. Many of you feel it over much perhaps in the mechanical practice which is necessary to

attain technical mastery. But, on the other hand, there is the absolute need of the development of the understanding which directs and applies the efficiency. So there are efficiency and understanding, these two ; and the greatest of these is understanding. The development of understanding is the most appropriate field of aspiration. Aspiration which projects itself towards merely mechanical things almost always dries up. But aspiration which projects itself towards the spiritual things by which the mechanical things are glorified always brings a man fruit at the last. It is through understanding that mechanical efficiency is made fruitful. Mere efficiency works in the externals ; understanding delves to the innermost of the meaning and purpose of things.

Let us take an illustration from our own intimate experience. The commonplace specialist devotes himself to the exact reproduction of the notes and signs of a composition he has to perform. He does not know that it has any meaning ; he does not even approach to feeling its aesthetic qualities. As far as understanding goes, he is only on the level of the stupidest of the herd to whom he will, as performer, purvey the choicest specimens of

the great masters. His idea of satisfying the great public and winning the name of a great performer are such as appeal to the lowest stratum of his audience. The poor dear great masters suffer unspeakable indignities at his hands. If a thing is to go fast, he tries to make it go faster than ever it went before, and sacrifices everything to that. There is no question of grace, elegance, expression, phrasing, humour, playfulness, or any other things that appeal to the mind. It is pace that tells, and what the public wants, and pace it shall have. If a thing is to be thumped, our expert specialist tries to thump it harder than ever it was thumped before, and the public rocks with the joy of pure sensation ; if a thing is to be accented, he hits it so hard that every nervous old woman in the audience nearly jumps off her seat.

To produce such prodigious results is the aspiration of the specialist in technique. It is what you may call sacrificing the higher considerations to the lower. It is the effect in some cases of irrepressible longing for public recognition, of low ideals, and lack of understanding ; but it is also sometimes the painful effect of too persistent drudgery ; of too

prolonged specialisation; of repeating things over and over again in the hope of mastering them, till they cease to have any meaning at all.

The person who aspires to develop his understanding and his personality is generally too much interested in what he is working at to care much whether it will interest the public or not; or to dream of such a thing as attempting to astonish them. It is hard indeed for him to concentrate on technique. Very likely he hates his scales and exercises. He wants to play what interests him and to make it mean something. Sometimes his ardour develops a technique far beyond that of the mere mechanician. The craving to vanquish some special difficulty, which stands obstructive to the perfect interpretation, inspires him to superhuman effort; and he triumphs where the aspirant to mere efficiency would never get further than a stalemate. No doubt he occasionally sacrifices the higher consideration to the lower because of his personal limitations, and that lack of discrimination between live and dead tradition to which young people of his type are liable. But tradition that is really alive will survive such trifling

misapprehensions, and the individual mistakes are more capable of being corrected than those that have been borrowed from other people. And everybody knows that a few bars of something really fine, presented with the real genuine aspiration after insight and understanding, are worth a great deal more than all the most brilliant tricks of the human pianola; and it is the same with all the circumstances of life.

So aspiration can become an inspiring impulse which gives vigorous life to all things which come within its influence. It becomes limp and stunted if it is only applied to some little special subject, and people who use their store of it so miss the more spacious view of individual life. One can generally distinguish between the profitable and unprofitable aspirations by the extent to which they are directed towards ends which lie beyond the merely mechanical efforts, or towards such mechanical efforts as ends in themselves. It is the old familiar relation of the spirit to the letter. The meaning of the letter cannot be found by studying the letter by itself. It can only be found through the knowledge of things outside it, which bear upon it and throw light



on it. It is in such ways that the aspiration after things that are not obvious becomes of such infinite service.

The things which are of greatest service in life are generally those in which most people do not see any service at all. It is the things which only reveal themselves when people begin to use their minds a little which are most fruitful.

*January 1916.*



WAR



1914

I AM quite pleasantly surprised to find that I seem to have seen most of you before. I fully expected to find you overwhelmed by the dreadful topic which discomposes most people's nerves, and that even familiar faces would look strange. It is delightful to find such anticipations superfluous, and to realise that the College spirit is undaunted, and that you come together again with the same bright-eyed keenness as on ordinary occasions. Under the circumstances it seems an open question whether I ought to dwell upon the events which have moved the world so much, or discuss only such things as concern us at the College. Some very ideal people might say that I ought on such an occasion to devote myself to our domestic concerns and treat the great issues outside as if they did not affect us. But quite apart from the uselessness of being

guided by fantastic abstractions we cannot regard our domestic interests as being unaffected by the strange nightmare which attracts universal attention. For one thing which concerns us deeply is that quite a lot of our happy family party have been honourably inspired to go and chance the risks of military life ; and among them are some very distinguished young musicians.

We feel a thrill of regard for them. It gives a comfortable feeling of admiration for our fellow-countrymen when we see them moved by fine and honourable motives to face the awful conditions of modern warfare—to risk their lives, and sometimes even worse, for generous ideals. We like the College to be represented by such spirited young people.

But then we must also face the facts with open minds. The College in relation to war is in a different position from other educational institutions. Our pupils are made of different stuff from the pupils of ordinary schools. They are gifted in a rare and special way. Some of them are so gifted that their loss could hardly be made good. It would be a special loss to the community. They might bring special

honour to their country by their special gifts, and if that were frustrated it is an open question whether the cost would not be too heavy. The world cannot afford to throw away such lives as if they were of no more account than lives which gave no special promise of a rare kind.

Think for yourselves what it would have meant if Wagner had happened to lose his life in the Dresden disturbances in 1849, and the world had never had *Tristan* or *Meistersinger*, or the *Ring* or *Parsifal*. We hear of Kreisler being in the Austrian Army, and Rachmaninoff with the Russians, and we honour them for their devotion, even if we think such beings should be set apart for other purposes. And we may have the feeling, parenthetically, that if they happened to meet in hostile squadrons the murderous frenzy of war would be stilled and they would fall on one another's necks instead of trying to kill one another. The claims of art would vindicate themselves as of higher cogency.

There is too great a liability where a thing or being that represents spiritual value is thrown into the conflict of material issues. It is, indeed, a painful thought that a human creature,

delicately and subtly organised for the spiritual needs of humanity, should be thrown into the vortex of savage slaughter. As if the spiritual qualities were of no moment at all! It seems almost as pitiful as sending highly cultivated and highly organised beings to go to work with the butchers, and slaughter pigs and cattle and amiable, playful little lambs, instead of devoting themselves to spiritual activities which will be of infinitely greater value to humanity.

But yet, on the other hand, we cannot help being very glad that musicians should show the same spirit, and show that their mettle is as good for strenuous doings as that of men of other occupations in life. No doubt the average silly notion has been that musicians are soft. It might have been so in this country when there was so much of the back street about English music. Now that music has come into the light of day here, and is cultivated by others besides the commercial classes, at both ends of the social scale, musicians are as full of courage and vigour as other people. But our feelings on the question are inevitably in frequent conflict. At one moment we are feeling joyful that the College should be



represented among the fighting hosts, and then at another we waver and count the cost.

It is a bewildering fact that the people who offer themselves to such risks are often of the very best quality, and very often such as the world can ill spare; while numbers of those who do not offer themselves are mere loafers and shirkers who would be no loss, and would even be better and happier for being forced to face the guns and learn what a gain some experience of a really strenuous life would be to them. Again, we are glad that we have amongst us those mortals of the finer fibre, even if we can ill spare them. We must spare them if they are set on going, and we must keep a warm place in our hearts for them, and honour them to the full for maintaining the credit of musicians and of the College in this fearful crisis. We must even do all we can to make it easy for them to go, and keep their scholarships waiting for them in the hope that they will some day come back; and we must release pupils from their pledge to be with us for three terms if they have not completed them when the call comes to them to go.

But we shall do it with full recognition of the exceptional value of what we spare; and

also in confidence that they will go into the *inferno* of shot and shell with the same light-hearted gaiety that is so thrilling in the British soldiers and sailors. This parting with some of our best will bring the reality of the war home to us, and steady us, and make us think of all it means in a serious spirit. But there are plenty of other ways in which such a tremendous event must affect us. It is useless to try to put it aside.

Apart from the mere daily excitement of war news, there is one great thought which overshadows all others. There is forced upon us the overwhelming and soul-shaking experience of seeing the downfall of a great nation from honour and noble estate. We cannot help recalling the splendid hexameter in our English version of Isaiah, "How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!" This is the German nation which in former times was glorified by producing some of the noblest minds that shone in the world of art. Heinrich Schütz, Johann Sebastian Bach, Handel, Gluck, Beethoven, Schumann, Brahms—the nation which has produced great poets, great philosophers, great scientists, great scholars, great inventors of things which have

benefited humanity to the utmost. And now it falls painfully to our lot to see them commit the most gigantic crime that has ever been perpetrated by a nation in history—the wilfully sudden declaration of war against France, which they purposely made sudden in the hope that it would take the French unprepared. And we have seen them follow it up with a crime as base and hideous: the invasion of peaceful, industrious little Belgium, because they thought it insignificant and incapable of resisting them. And then we have seen them go on from crime to crime, throwing all honour and truth and decency to the winds—feeding on falsehoods, destroying things irreplaceable—insulting all intelligent humanity—wallowing in reckless infamy. Can this be the nation with a glorious past of thinkers, artists, and heroes? What can have perverted them?

They have become a nation that hates! The so-called philosophy that represents their present state is the philosophy of hatred and destruction. We used to laugh at their much-vaunted philosopher Nietzsche for the concentrated essence of bitter spite which he expressed. We stared in bewildered incredulity at the textbooks of their War-lords, and thought it

impossible that such things could really be meant by any human being, however grossly perverted. Many of us thought they were mere eccentric individual aberrations, not in any way representative of the general opinion and feeling of the nation.

I have my own confession to make. For I have been a quarter of a century and more a pro-Teuton. I owed too much to their music and their philosophers and authors of former times to believe it possible that the nation at large could be imbued with the teaching of a few advocates of mere brutal violence and material aggression; with the extravagance of those who talked about super-morality; with the ruthless implications of their insistence that the State is power, and nothing but power, and has no concern with honour, right, justice, or fair play.

But we are painfully disabused. We are forced to admit that men who seemed to libel and traduce them have proved to be right. These seeming incredible theories of their prominent writers prove to be the present spiritual expression of a nation we once honoured, and many members of which we greeted with ungrudging friendliness. We know now that

it is arrogance run mad. We know it is the hideous militarism of the Prussians that has poisoned the wells of the spirit throughout Germany—that it has poisoned them by cynical manipulation of the Press, and all the channels through which enlightenment can flow to the millions, for nearly half a century—by actually preventing their government-controlled newspapers from publishing truth, by cultivating the arts of false suggestion, and by holding up to general worship the fetish formula of “Blood and Iron,” which has been their bane! We know now that if we cannot scotch the war-fiend the world will not be worth living in. We know too that we must be prepared for tremendous sacrifices, for sufferings, for losses, for terrible blows and anxieties. And we must learn to look them steadfastly and coolly in the face.

So far as we have gone we must admit that we have been fortunate in many ways. It is far easier to keep an equal frame of mind when you are confident that your honour is so far without a blemish. We may justifiably be proud that we went into this war for absolutely honourable motives, and that it has proved that the things that were spitefully prophesied about us are

utterly untrue. We can be proud to find that Britishers can still fight and go into the fight rejoicing. Our soldiers and sailors have vindicated our honour magnificently, and if it had not been for our Fleet and the Army our enemies professed to despise, the butchers and brigands of Berlin would have been in Paris long ago, and all the northern French ports would have been bombarded and destroyed by their navy. We have reason to be proud, too, of the universal goodwill which has been shown by the Colonies and India, and the cordial unity which the crisis has proved throughout the Empire.

These things the war has done for us already, and they create obligations. It rests with every one of us to pay willingly his share of the cost, and to keep himself in hand; and if bad times should come, not to rush about like a lot of aimless distracted rabbits, but to show the calm and courage that is worthy of the nation. The courage we are called upon to show is that which will enable us to go on with our lives and occupy ourselves as usual, as if there was no dreadful and violent war going on. Do not forget that civil life and domestic life has to go on. It is much

best that it should go on as far as possible as usual, and that we should keep on in our several ways doing what is marked out for us to do with steadiness of nerve and even cheerfulness. It is a great comfort to see that the College can go on with its work in spite of such dreadful distractions : that there are plenty of people who are not reduced to idiocy by panic, and do not want to sit helplessly doing nothing but groan and babble about horrible outrages and pour out useless imprecations against the Germans.

It is always bad for people's nerves to have only one subject that engrosses their attention. If we cannot find something else to occupy our minds now and then we run the risk of becoming monomaniacs and spending our lives in hunting for the last silly rumour, and putting our faith in any nonsense that happens to flatter our hopes or excite our fears. It is for the honour of the nation that we should keep our minds duly ballasted, and maintain the capacity to hold ourselves well in hand, and have patience to verify things before we allow ourselves to be carried away by the excitement that betrays people into credulity and hysterical folly.

I hope the College will set an example of self-possession, and if, ultimately, the imperial bird of Prussia, which to me looks so much like a spatchcocked carrion crow, waves over our towers in the place of the Union Jack, all the people belonging to it will prefer extermination to submission; and I confidently believe that if we have to stand in rows over against the Albert Hall with files of Prussian soldiers ready to demolish us, we shall all look down the murderous barrels without winking an eyelash. But if, on the other hand, that hideous bird is duly and properly cooked, I hope we shall show none of that same arrogance which has caused it to be the most poisonous emblem in the whole universe, but display our victorious joy with modesty, and even with chivalrous courtesy to our enemies.

It is a time like this which tests the genuineness of our work. The art we follow is fit to be pursued and cultivated even by the side of the greatest doings of active life. Its highest guarantee is that it should be capable of being a divine consoler in times of most piteous distress. The trivial art of the superficial-minded may well be set aside at



such a time. Even the feeble mind can feel its inadequacy. Perhaps indeed war may teach trivial people a little sense, and enable them to realise the futility of a life of frivolous and purposeless amusement. The great thoughts of real composers, to which we devote ourselves, are as valuable to the world as great victories. They are such spiritual food as keeps on lifting us into the higher spheres when great victories are mere memories.

But one may grant too that our art may be greatly inspired by heroism: not the fussy, aggressive, blatant heroism of the Prussian *Heldenleben*, but the heroism we hear of daily in stories from the front. Real heroism is chivalrous and frank, modest and un-aggressive, cheerful in adversity and un-boastful in success. True music can be inspired by such qualities, and when it really is so inspired it can convey a noble message to us. And we all in our various ways may contribute our little mite to the sum total of the heroism of the nation by the cleanliness and wholesomeness of our lives, by truthfulness and large-heartedness, and by going on steadfastly applying ourselves to the things it is our lot to do, and patiently denying

ourselves the excitement of trying to do things we are not fit for and leaving them to those who are.

We may also remember that our devotion to our art is one of the things which help to that better state of man which counteracts the brutalising impulses. We know from such a book as Lieutenant Bilsse's *Life in a German Garrison* what a shallow thing the boasted diffusion of culture by Prussia is: how militarism stupefies the privileged officers and makes them cynically corrupt and immoral, and how it debases the unfortunate private soldiers, whose destiny it is to be driven for the vulgar ambition of Prussia like sheep to the shambles. A truly independent democratic spirit would not submit to such a monstrous system. And it is by encouraging the democracy to be independent and to take interest in things which make them reasonable and genuinely enlightened that such enormities and savageries as seem inevitable in warfare may be ultimately ended. All those things which encourage men to believe in mutual helpfulness, mutual appreciation, good fellowship, generosity of mind and temper, tend to the highest kind of real civilisation. And in

devoting yourselves to your art and fitting yourselves to make its highest examples understood and appreciated by the multitude you may help the world to escape from orgies of brutality such as are now going on, as well as from the unutterable stupidity and blindness which is the inevitable penalty men pay for worshipping false gods.

Just for the present you can also welcome your art as a relief from preoccupation in horrors, and as a safeguard against spending superfluous time in trying to devise language adequate to the situation. Do not be disheartened if the goal proves to be a long way off, and the progress to it slow. It is for the honour of the nation that we should not be impatient, but possess our souls with firmness in the hope that things will come right in the end, and with the resolve to use our own little opportunities so as to add something to the credit of the country in the million-faceted consummation which must be achieved.

*September 1914.*

## COMRADES AND THE ENEMY

WE have not been made callous by our excitements; the daily record of precious lives thrown away in the senseless riot of carnage has not yet deprived us of the power to feel the loss of those who have earned our affection and admiration in our home affairs. The changed value that comes to be put on life when people are actually engaged in war does not apply to our civil life as yet; though we do not know how we should feel if we had had experiences such as have fallen to the lot of the poor Belgians.

Perhaps if we had had to endure such home tragedies our capacities for sympathy with suffering and death might have become exhausted. One can hardly imagine tender-hearted people seeing human beings maimed and tortured and dying of starvation every day without being driven to adopt another

standard of gauging individual disaster from that of ordinary peace times. I suppose, in such conditions, the feeling for the individual becomes diffused; the personal sympathy gives place to the sympathy for the many. Community in suffering and loss changes the character even of mourning. There are some people so hedged about with self-concentration that they are selfish even in their distresses. They suffer helplessly, and have to be supported by other people who have just as much reason for suffering. If they could realise that other people have their sufferings and losses too they might not suffer less, but they would support their losses and sorrows with more considerate self-possession. They would not abandon themselves to paroxysms of unrestrained bewailings, but for the sake of their fellows in suffering put restraint upon the mere expression of it.

The feeling of what is due to others in like case ministers here as elsewhere to strength, and even to a strange cheerfulness in the face of loss and disaster. Men speak of the growth of the "community feeling" being so great a gain. The community feeling is an expansion of the sense of comradeship, and is one

of the few compensations which war seems to offer; and seems to counterbalance those sterile class distinctions which make frank companionship impossible.

In war time the individual is merged in the mass of humanity which is engaged in dangerous occupations. The sense of mutual dependence must be enormously increased, and the instinct of fellowship is called into vivid activity. Fellowship in danger is exhilarating. Men face death in a spirit they never thought of before; and if a man is mortally wounded his distress at the ending of his own life is generally discounted by the feeling that there are numbers of others left to deal with the enemy. Man, for once in a way, recognises himself as part of something bigger. The sense of comradeship shows itself in its noblest aspects, as the great force it ought to be in all the affairs of life. The sense of comradeship helps in sorrow, and in effort, in danger and in dying. It is the sense of it which enables men to face the torrent of death-dealing lead and the shards of the shrapnels. It is the sense of it which enables men to think lightly of the bitter cold of cruel wintry seas, when their

ship may be struck at any moment by a torpedo or a mine.

The comradeship feeling naturally gives rise to the aspiration to do something that man's fellows in danger would endorse as fine and heroic. The world progresses by the latent desire of all men to help one another, and the consequent desire to have any good service appreciated by others, as an endorsement of the service being real. We hear frequent stories of men who risk their lives, and sometimes lose them, to help other wounded men, even enemies, whom, it often happens, they know nothing about. There may be nothing to show that the wounded man, lying helpless out in the open, exposed to the hail of bullets, is not one of the greatest miscreants unhung, and would not be better dead and done with. But there is no question about that. The heroic moment offers, the impulse comes, and off starts the possibly quite ordinary man to help a fellow man in trouble, at the risk of his own life. To him in any case the moment is glorious, for it satisfies the highest aspiration of which man is capable.

The most hopeful natural instinct of man is to be of service, and to act in concert with

others. It is only when some mischievous instinct perverts him that he wants to destroy instead of helping. The instincts which impel to destruction are the ones which the world tries to get under control, because sane people are aware that indulgence in destruction profits no one. It not only profits no one, but it leaves poisonous germs behind it. The germs of hate go on slowly developing, as they did after the Franco-German War in 1870 and 1871; and there can be little doubt that the present madness of fruitless destruction is to a great extent the outcome of long pent-up hostilities generated by that war of forty-four years ago. Both nations have been constantly bickering and girding at one another, and the final explosion was almost inevitable.

A vast number of causes minister to any great event. People mistake who lay too much stress on one to the exclusion of the others. We admit a vast number of different things as having combined to produce the awful madness of this war, and among them the memory of the previous war, and the galling terms which were made the conditions of peace—which show the utter futility of war as a cure for anything. But another



cause was also the outcome of that war and the precursor of this one, which is the madness of self-complacency which took possession of the Prussians and impelled them to the inconceivable stupidity of thinking they could conquer and Germanise the whole world. It is the most colossal object-lesson the world has ever had of the stupefying effect of an absolutely false attitude of mind. For one stupidity led to another. The Prussians persuaded themselves that we should sit quiet and look on while they harried poor Belgium; while they committed gratuitous murders on civilians; while they destroyed things of beauty and romance which were unreplaceable. They persuaded themselves that we had egged on the Belgians to attack them, and that it was justifiable retaliation to drag millions of money out of the dwellers in the ruins they had made. They were stupid enough to think they could get serviceable help by associating themselves with the unspeakable Turk. They were stupefied by false reports, most of which they engineered themselves, into thinking that as soon as war was declared all our Colonies, as well as India, would cut adrift from us and offer themselves as convenient victims

for Germany's ambitions. They were stupid enough to maintain that after their professors, authors, and philosophers had been writing books for years describing their malignant purposes against us, and reeking with hate from every pore, they were but meek and innocent lambs, against whom perfidious Albion had organised a pogrom.

We might go on for hours recounting the gross instances of blind stupidity that have so amazed us. We have been accustomed to regard the Germans as great thinkers—and so they have been. They have been great at metaphysics and such kinds of abstractions. But metaphysics do not bring men into touch with actualities; not even with the notorious camel which the great German philosopher is reported to have said it was unnecessary for him to see as he could develop it out of his own inner consciousness. Metaphysics tend rather to draw the mind away from the practical, and to dull the capacities to deal with actual emergencies; and they seem to make certain types of men fit subjects to be cajoled into believing impossibilities, such as the obvious impossibility of dominating the world by force, and even to induce them to extenuate force which

is used without a shadow of pretence of morality, honesty, frankness, or fairness.

It is always the case that an evil theory or an evil habit, such as indulgence in things which are of evil odour in matters of morality, breeds consequences all around, like a poisonous fungus. Corruption never confines itself to its own area. It contaminates all things in its neighbourhood. The German theory that human beings can be ruled better by blows than by good-will, that a country—which they forget is a people—can be conquered in the old mediaeval fashion, is in itself so poisonously blind and stupid that it is sure to infect all things in its neighbourhood. The ideal of right ruling is ruling for the well-being of the ruled. But how is it to be supposed that a conquered people could be ruled for their benefit, or even for the ultimate benefit of the conquerors? If they were worth ruling they would never submit. If they tamely submitted they would not be worth ruling. In either case there would be no chance of its developing the vigorous vitality in making the world fit to live in, which is essential to the well-being of any people. The German theory in this respect is justifiably called infernal,

because it is directly contrary to the spiritual health and progress of the world. What the world needs is helpfulness, the general goodwill that works to great ends in comradeship—room for free play of individual energies of countless varieties; for free energies, which spring spontaneously and healthily in men's natures.

The world needs to realise that things have to be done by the concurrence of an infinite variety of minds; that nothing is achieved by ill-will but more ill-will, but that all things are possible to good-will. The Germans have fastened on the idea that good-will is only needed for themselves. They are on a grand scale like the walled-in selfish man who thinks his own worldly interests are the only things that concern him. The selfish monomaniac achieves nothing that is of any real service to any one, least of all to himself. If he is strong he can do a lot of harm; and so can the Germans. He can be a danger to his neighbourhood; and so can the Germans. Prussia might ultimately effect the entire destruction of our civilisation; it might destroy in a few years all that has been done to better human conditions in many centuries. If Prussia succeeded in permanently weakening the

nations which uphold order and spiritual health, they would provide more opportunities for the disorderly and ill-regulated nations. Europe might even be so debilitated that that ominous expression, "the yellow peril," might come to have some real meaning.

And it all comes out of the acceptance by the nation of a false theory of life. It comes mainly from the party, known as the Prussian Junkers, who, one would surmise, must be a great fount and source of stupidity, since they still batten upon the worn-out theory of class privilege; which tries still to induce men to believe that the world was made for the few, and that when the few think it for their advantage the many are to be driven to kill one another in hundreds of thousands and to suffer every kind of torment without any one except the few gaining any advantage. The many are taking an astonishingly long time to realise that privileged people always think of their own advantages, be they ever so trivial, before they concern themselves about the well-being of the people who grant them privileges. No one ever thinks any better of people who grant him privileges. He generally thinks them fools, and treats them

as such. There must have been a quite remarkable proportion of docile fools in Germany in recent years, or it would have been impossible for their privileged Junkers to perpetrate such a colossal crime, after flaunting their intentions for years. The poor docile fools have to pay by being driven by their own countrymen like sheep to the shambles.

I suppose some of us may not see the end of this war.<sup>1</sup> But we have that feeling of fellowship with those who will survive it that we project ourselves into the future as if we were going to be there, and hope ardently that humanity will join hands in good-will across the frontiers and say to the privileged few that they have made mischief enough, and after the horrors of this prolonged orgy of hatred really make up their minds not to be used for the advantage or enrichment of the few any longer.

But the basis of such good-will must always lie in understanding. There is always hope even for quarrelsome people if they try hard to understand each other—if they try to get into the convolutions of an adversary's mind

<sup>1</sup> Sir Hubert Parry died October 7, 1918; one month before the armistice with Germany.

and see how he comes to think what he does. That, we perceive, the Germans did not try to do. They tried to do the very reverse. Like hopelessly quarrelsome people they always tried to put a false construction on everything every one else did. They tried to be so supremely clever that they could always see something that was not there, especially when any people did anything which was simply honest and straightforward. They developed such a situation that nobody could trust them, and therefore they could trust nobody. And distrust brought the usual resort to violence. Somebody will have to pay the penalty. We hope it will not be ourselves. Humanity, at any rate, will have to pay heavily, so let us hope that when it has paid it will get wisdom and understanding from the experience.

Do not think because I go on discussing the Germans I am only thinking of them. I think of the many parallels in all sorts of human conditions. I have my eye ultimately on ourselves. I believe we fully appreciate the value of helpfulness; and we know the delight of doing things in companionship, and endorse the truth that the world progresses better

by good-will than by any amount of remorseless driving. I do not have any apprehension that the College will be afflicted by stupefying aberrations; but still, in times of violent excitement, even our most ancient friends sometimes astonish us. Violent excitement always paralyses a certain amount of common sense. But in any case, we have definite and pacific things on which we can concentrate our minds, out of the range of bellicose excitements; and to such alleviations I should commend all who are disposed to feed solely on war news. If the Germans had been content to devote themselves to metaphysics and music the world might have been spared the painful and offensive exhibition they have made of themselves. I do not mean to recommend metaphysics to you as a safeguard against aberrations, but I might without hesitation recommend music. We might add the hope that the Germans may go back to their music too, and leave alone the business of dominating the world by any other means but peaceful art; which, in truth, until this evil day of their own misconstriving, they had nearly accomplished.

*January 1915.*



## THE INDIVIDUAL IN WAR

WE have to part with some who have not finished their College time, but have been impelled by heroic impulses to join the Forces who are upholding the nation's honour; and to risk their lives in the dreadful turmoil of war while they are still pupils of the College. Nominally, their departure is only temporary; but it gives us a little twitch of the heart to use the word "temporary," for we know too well how great the risks are, and that they may never come back to us to develop to completeness those fine artistic qualities which might have brought special honour to us and even to the nation. We must applaud their spirit to the full, and look forward in the hope that some day we shall see them among us again after acquitting themselves worthily. It will be a proud day for us, for it will remind us that young musicians are as ready for things

that require bodily activity, energy, the endurance of very hard conditions, and the facing of many horrible dangers, as the best of men in other walks of life.

It is very natural that people should think it unlikely that those who are musically endowed should be fit for such experiences; they are nurtured in things which breed refinement, delicacy of sentiment, and the poetical and sensitive qualities rather than those that are supposed to help in action. The question whether the real cultivation of the mind lessens the hardihood of the body is one of the most important ones humanity has to solve in these days. There are excuses for the strenuous sporting type of men despising the men of study. They see so many mere loafers who toy with art and poetry and other literature, and make it an excuse for a life of languid self-indulgence. So they think all people who do not join their sports must be feeble loafers. But their reasoning suffers from incomplete observation. The real question is whether the spiritual or artistic education which brings much greater sensitiveness of every kind, and makes pain and distress more difficult to bear, does not bring also greater

ardour and keenness, and greater self-mastery, which amply compensate. People who dislike education and distrust all forms of mental development, and there are plenty of them, say it makes people soft, and that men fought and endured better when they were more nearly on a level with pigs. Our theory is quite the reverse, that the development of real capacities of mind makes men more steadfast, more capable of self-sacrifice, and more brave—and the events going on now fortify that view. It is most improbable that any large army ever known has approached within hail of our present army in the matter of mental development and education, because, being a voluntary army, such a large proportion are drawn from superior and more educated classes than in conscript armies. But no one questions their courage and devotion, or their capacity to go through with the frightfully rough conditions of the trenches. They know what they have to do, and a well-nurtured mind helps them to accomplish it.

One of our College boys, who has now got a commission, told me a good while ago, before he enlisted, that he had a horror of killing anything. It inspired him with such loathing

that it kept him back for a while. But the sense of duty prevailed, and the last time I saw him he was dressed in khaki and looked as fine and determined a soldier as ever you could wish to see. I know of others too, endowed with refined and delicate perceptions, who found the rough conditions of camp life, and the total cessation of all the finer influences of the art they were born for, very trying. But they have made themselves face it, and one of them at least is now in the trenches. We have no fear of their not being equal in dash and daring to the best in any rank of life. I am not sure indeed that there is not some risk of their being too rash and needlessly exposing lives which really have rather an exceptional value. Musicians are liable to be lifted off their feet into the higher plane of fervent enthusiasm, which makes personal considerations of little moment; and we know one or two who in such a state of mind would expose themselves to a fearful death without any concern at all.

One of the cruellest things in warfare is the uncertainty of it all. It is the merest chance who falls and who survives, except that those who are endowed with the finest

qualities are likeliest to expose themselves to danger.

In the awful waste of human life that is now going on, there may be many men killed who, if they were spared, might be numbered among the world's greatest heroes. It is always possible that a nation might fail at a great crisis because the man who could cope with it had been killed too soon. Nelson might very well have been killed either in Corsica or at Teneriffe, and there might not have been any one left fit to make the battles of the Nile and Trafalgar live among the greatest episodes in our history of warfare. Wellington was nearly killed in the abject campaign in the Low Countries in 1794, of which he himself said, "It has always been a marvel to me how any of us escaped"; and where would the campaign of the Peninsula and Waterloo have been then? The unbeaten Captain, Marlborough, nearly lost his life in the wreck of the *Gloucester* on Yarmouth Sands in 1682, and one wonders what history would have been like without him at Blenheim and Ramillies; Clive, the founder of our Indian Empire, merely survived through the bewilderment of a Frenchman in a duel;

Clyde,<sup>1</sup> the hero of the suppression of the Indian Mutiny, narrowly escaped at the Alma, Roberts at Delhi, and many of our greatest leaders of men in hundreds of vital contests might easily have fallen in some obscure foray before they revealed the great qualities which have helped to make us love and be proud of our England.

The terrible chances of war ought to make us capable of taking thought seriously. It is very desirable in these days. We have no need to be affected by that common mistake of light-minded people, who think that those who take serious things seriously cannot be merry and light-hearted and joke and enjoy fun, but live in gloomy preoccupation and aloofness. A man can be among the merriest and most light-hearted and be gay and glad in all the joys of life, and yet feel serious things deeply and fully. A glum face is no proof of seriousness, nor a merry eye of levity. A glum face is a proof as often as not of mere personal discontent, or exasperated egotism; not of sympathy with other people's distresses. Some men can joke on the inevitable edge of personal disaster, and laugh in the face of

<sup>1</sup> Sir Colin Campbell.

death; but they would not laugh or joke in the presence of a fellow creature's sufferings or misfortunes. The man who has courage enough to keep cheerful in his own misfortunes, and is downcast only about other people's, has the true and serviceable admixture of seriousness and cheerfulness. We hear of plenty of such splendid men in the trenches, and you may be sure they take serious things seriously enough. Their spirit ought to lift us off our feet and give us a touch of their heroism.

But in some ways the lot of those who go into the fighting and accept discipline as part of its necessities, and have something definite to address themselves to, is easier than the lot of those who stay at home. It is harder for those who have to go about their daily avocations to show their mettle to the best advantage. When people are surrounded with their usual tables and chairs and all the comforts of regularly ordered existence, with their breakfasts and their dinners coming quite regularly, it is hard to rise above the routine of trivialities which have become habitual. It takes a long time to get the average attitude of mind of people in general changed. Habit is too

strong. Sometimes the apparent character of a people is hustled into change by a cataclysm.

No doubt if the enemy had succeeded in smashing up our homes, even apparently silly people might have been made serious. But we have been in some ways too lucky; and silly and thoughtless people, seeing nothing particular happen to their domestic arrangements, go on being silly and thoughtless. They merely drink in the excitements which are daily supplied by the newspapers, or the gratuitously idiotic rumours that flatter all their lowest impulses. If you walk through the park on a fine day you see vacant and complacent faces of loafers as usual, and the same half-witted female dupes of fashion looking as like chimpanzees decked out in fantastic ribands and feathers as in peace times; and with all the horrors and tragedies and losses, the over-rich empty-heads are as vulgar and ostentatious as ever. There are too many to whom the reality of what is happening has not come home yet; and there are ominous signs that when their levity begins to fail them they are becoming hysterical, and they are showing themselves unworthy of the



splendid achievements of our soldiers and sailors. Abuse of public men who are doing their duty magnificently comes out in spasms. Now it is one, and now another, and the smouldering embers of party spirit are blown into flame.

It is always so when people do not give their minds properly to things and hold themselves in hand, and learn what fair judgement requires. When stress comes, such people are all abroad, and show utter lack of sense of proportion and self-control. The people who have had nothing to do but loaf and amuse themselves are the trouble. They are not accustomed to think, and are victims of any temporary panic. Even when they try to be useful in these difficult days, they, for the most part, make a mess of it and get in other people's way. If they have never tried to do anything but indulge their momentary and incoherent caprices, how can they be expected to do anything useful all of a sudden!

If you will think, you can realise that every nation, including our own, has an enormous number of stupid, silly, vulgar, idle, unclean, greedy, low-minded, dishonest people; and what makes the difference between one nation

and another is the proportion of those who have fine qualities, such as sincerity, energy, sense of honour, self-control, courage, keenness, generosity, and high spiritual standards. The comfort is that the great crisis has revealed such a splendid number of high-spirited people. One wonders, with great delight, where all these hosts of keen young soldiers come from. Their faces have, many of them, a new expression—the expression of purpose and object. They, at least, have found their opportunity. Life decisively ceases to be aimless for them, and though endangered, it has some savour of real achievement in it. Many of them are inspired by the ideal of fine and devoted service. We hardly expected the nation could produce such a lot of them. They come from every kind of occupation, where their fine possibilities and qualities were hidden ; where, likely as not, there were no openings ; so we were in ignorance of the existence of such a big reserve of spirit and vitality among us.

It is no wonder foreigners were misled, for, like ourselves, they were only able to judge by what appears in newspapers ; and as newspapers find more profitable copy in recording

the doings of the do-nothings and their levities and follies, there was some excuse for the people at home and elsewhere who thought we were going to perdition. The event has proved an inspiring surprise, for it has proved that there are plenty of young and even old people who are capable of taking serious things in the right way. For it must be granted that breaking away from one's business moorings and one's domestic amenities and affections, to join the rough and tumble of the fighting array, with a good chance of being killed or maimed for life, is a serious matter. The soldiers, at all events, realise by this time the dimensions of the work they have got to do, and they can still be merry in company with the hosts of others who join in the serious work. And we may gladly recognise that there are lots of splendid people among the civil population, too, who are quietly and devotedly giving all they have to give of service (and of money, too) to help those who are in difficulties, and the wounded and the bereaved. They are for the most part such as have had something definite to do in life, and have been in the habit of taking some things seriously.

You at the College are happy in this respect,

for you have your own special work, which naturally invites serious attention. So when it is the affairs of the nation which need seriousness, it ought not to be difficult for you, young as you are, to find the right attitude of mind. Of course you are merry, and small blame to you while you are young and the zest of life is still strong in you. But your cheerfulness is not, as far as I can see, the merriment of levity, but the wholesome joy of life and doing, which, in spite of the background of terrible things, cannot and need not be extinguished.

As I have said before, civil life has to go on; and people who have definite things to do, such as developing special gifts of art, can help and keep their minds healthily balanced by doing what they have got to do with all their might—and as far as the great world issues are concerned, by trying to understand them and develop level judgement about them. They can help by being patient and steadfast, not blown about by every gust of capricious excitement; by lending a hand when chance offers, without either selfish hanging back or equally selfish obtrusiveness; by lending a heart when sympathy is called for, and trying to contribute to the honour of our country in

the final outcome. And if the final outcome for this country is victory, we shall do well to remember that it can be completed only by other victories than those of arms—by such victories as those over our meaner and baser selves, by victories over the worthless parts of ourselves and our lower impulses. All the nation can take part in such victories, and without them mere victory in arms, however dazzling, will be incomplete.

*May 1915.*

## THE COLLEGE IN PEACE AND WAR

THERE is always so much joy in meeting together here at the beginning of a term that a visitor from another planet might infer we were quite indifferent to everything but our own domestic affairs, and that great events outside cast no shadows within. From one point of view it is a very good sign. It is a sign of mutual good-will, and of vigorous spiritual health, and of the whole-hearted belief that the art to which circumstances have caused us to devote ourselves is worthy of the honour we pay it. But in spite of our cheerfulness I feel that if we could lift its kindly veil we should find that the great strife of the nations is getting more and more hold on us. It is a sign of pluck and endurance that we can maintain such cheerfulness, and we hope we may maintain it to the end. But when every day that passes has quite an appreci-

able amount of it occupied by one overwhelming subject, it is not possible that we should escape its affecting our feelings about other subjects. It is not possible that we should escape criticising our own pre-occupation with anything but the urgent needs of the nation, and asking ourselves whether such pre-occupations are justifiable at such a time.

As the war becomes more and more exacting, the strain upon the country seems to demand the services of every one. So it comes about that we feel impelled to consider our work in relation to it, and whether we can justify ourselves in continuing to cultivate music when the attention of the nation is for the most part engrossed in war.

It must emphatically be said that the College is not a place for merely teaching people music. It is much more than that. It has always been a place with big aims of doing special services to the nation, and it was organised from the first with a view to their attainment. It aimed first of all, as the solid basis from which to effect its objects, at a corporate life. That is the kind of inspiring association of diverse people with a common object which unites human beings in the happiest of fellowship.

And the spirit always shown at these meetings at the beginning of term proves how completely it has succeeded.

When the College came into existence the old country was doddering along complacently in the ruts which had been worn by long continuance in one very limited range of music. Its attachment to choral music and oratorios and the old-fashioned cantatas was still almost unbroken. It took its musical pleasures, when it took them at all, very seriously, and all of them that were worth anything were of one cast.

So we had it in mind when we came into existence to do what we could to spread the appreciation of secular music, especially orchestral music, chamber music, and opera. With such aims we naturally gave much attention to our orchestra, and the men who devised the system of the College acted wisely in providing a complete scheme of scholarships for orchestral wind instruments, as well as for strings. As soon as we got to work the orchestra developed in a surprising manner, and before long surpassed our fondest anticipations. And after its mettle had been thoroughly tested in London we ventured on



taking it down into the country to give people in the provinces additional opportunities of hearing spirited performances of the finest kind of orchestral music. After a while, when the appreciation of orchestral music became more generally diffused and opportunities for hearing it out of London became more frequent, it was no longer necessary to go to such expense. Provincial towns began to set up their own orchestras ; the example of a fine standard of orchestral efficiency was set ; the seed was well sown, and country places enjoyed the fruit.

But we never lost sight of our objects. We trained some of the finest young players of wind instruments alive, and superb players of the violoncello, viola and violin ; and they became available for employment in provincial orchestras, as well as in the orchestras which were always increasing in numbers in London, and were like a leaven spreading healthily through the country. Under the enterprising guidance of Sir Charles Stanford we brought out new works of importance, and always maintained the highest standards both in the quality of the works and in their performance.

Another of our most cherished objects was the cultivation of chamber music and the fostering of the taste for it. We worked at it systematically year after year, and the amount of concentrated attention it has entailed for those of our professors who devoted their splendid talents to the teaching of ensemble playing (not to speak of the cost) could hardly be realised without actual experience. To test the results and give effect to our efforts we made it a rule to give two full-sized chamber compositions, such as quartets, quintets, or trios, at each of our chamber concerts; thereby sustaining the appreciation of a lofty form of art which meets with but scanty encouragement in modern times, even from amateurs of fair average intelligence and musical taste. The result has not only been admirable performances of chamber music of every school from Haydn to Franck, Debussy, Reger, Schönberg, and Ravel, but the foundation of admirable quartet parties of old College pupils, who expanded the work we had done at the College, and diffused the taste for chamber music far and wide through the country, and even in the slum districts of our overgrown cities.

Then the practice of having a College opera

performance once a year in a public theatre, which, after some difficulty and opposition, was established, afforded us opportunities of bringing out little-known works and of training a good many singers who have ultimately attained to very high positions among operatic artists in other countries besides England, and of constantly supplying singers who have had some serviceable experience, for employment by any of the operatic companies who venture on such a precarious line of musical enterprise.

We may not presume to claim that what has happened since we came into existence some thirty-two years ago was all owing to our efforts ; but the facts are there for any who are willing to make honest inferences. The spirit of the nation was out to discover new fields of musical experience, and in the last thirty years the whole aspect of music in this country has changed. Whereas thirty years ago there were but scanty opportunities to hear even Beethoven's Symphonies, and a tolerable performance of his Choral Symphony was a nine-days' wonder, and chamber concerts were almost limited to "Monday Pops," and an occasional venture by some enterprising

violinist ; nowadays, orchestral music of the most up-to-date difficulty is heard everywhere, and chamber concerts are familiar events even in provincial towns, and provincial people know orchestral music of all kinds, and the great quartets and other fine specimens of chamber music, as well as they used to know glees and madrigals and Mendelssohn's part-songs.

Apart from these decisive lines of action our policy has always been to inspire our people with the widest possible views, and to make their education minister to their understanding of far more than the individual studies to which they specially devoted themselves, so that wherever they went after they left us they might diffuse more light. For instance, we endeavoured to inspire our organists with the knowledge and understanding of many things which are quite out of the range of their work with their organ and their choir. We endeavoured to widen their view of art by giving them hearty appreciation of secular and instrumental music, and to fit them to take the lead in any provincial town where they happened to get an appointment, by conducting local orchestras and encouraging people

to take enlightened interest in music outside the limited range of their church services and their choral societies. And our organists, spread far and wide through the country, in cathedrals and great churches, have become some of our most effectual means of diffusing enlightenment in secular directions.

Then we have been able to afford our composers opportunities which were totally unknown thirty years ago for hearing a vast amount of music of every period and style, and we have encouraged them to experiment far and wide, and to watch modern developments and learn and assimilate what is worthy of the name of art, and to dispense with such things as are made merely for vain show and popularity with the thoughtless herd. And the result in this particular branch of art has been such as we may well be proud of. For, though two of our most gifted composers were cut off in the very heyday of their prime, there are always many before the public in every branch of music—some whose mastery of technique is quite thrilling in brilliancy, and others whose poetic fervour and geniality of fancy make us rejoice that we have helped in the development of their personalities.

And in relation to composers there was a very important consideration which had to be faced. Thirty years ago there were no opportunities for a young composer to hear anything he attempted in the line of secular instrumental music; and even in our more fortunate days it happens too often that gifts of a high order are baulked and artistic development thwarted through the composer never having a chance to test what he has put down on paper by hearing it. We had not only our own composers in mind, but those who did not belong to the College when, with the assistance of Mr. S. Ernest Palmer,<sup>1</sup> we devised the Patron's Fund. It was instituted to perform orchestral works and chamber compositions by young British composers, and it was the College itself which insisted upon the proviso that it was not to be confined to College composers, but to be extended to young British composers wherever they could be found, whether in other musical institutions or attached to none. And the result has been that a very large number of young composers have had the best lesson possible in hearing their works as they

<sup>1</sup> The Royal College of Music Patron's Fund was founded by Mr (now Sir) Ernest Palmer in 1903 with an endowment of £27,000.

wrote them, and the public has also had the opportunity of hearing a great many of them, and the critics of exercising their wits upon them.

If an institution is to be free to devote itself to big aims and not concern itself specially with its own interests and reputation it must be sure of its resources. An institution which has only indifferent professors and inadequate appliances, and has to do things cheaply must, no doubt, consider every course which may induce the ignorant and gullible public to glorify it and acclaim it the greatest institution in the world. But such an institution is handicapped in carrying out any wide and generous aims.

To enable the College to carry out its objects it had to have professors of the finest quality in every branch—men and women whose knowledge of their art and powers of mind were unrivalled. And if we look back to the lists of our teaching staff we can see good reasons why the College had little reason to be anxious about mere reputation, but could address itself to big projects. If we think of the organ branch, or composition, or singing, or pianoforte, or strings, or harmony, or

counterpoint, or wind instruments or orchestra or ensemble playing, in every branch we can discern past and present teachers who have stood almost unapproachable in their particular spheres.

Then if we turn to the young people who constitute the means through which the country and our art is to be served, and through whom the aims of the College are to be carried out, we can see how fortunate we have been in being able to range through the whole country, and draw into the College fold a large proportion of the most gifted young people by means of our scholarships. The College was extraordinarily fortunate in its first group of scholars. They were not only very gifted, but had, with a few exceptions, decisive qualities of fine character, which set a standard which has ever since been perceptible in the College scholars as a body; and being the nucleus of the whole mass of the pupils their tone has seemed to influence the general atmosphere of the College in a wholesome, strenuous, and serious way. The last word rests with the pupils in general. If they are responsive and have an inkling of what the objects of the College are, and of their oppor-



tunities in furthering them, those objects are constantly being accomplished.

Now it is the existence of such aims and our constancy in pursuing them which justifies our devoting ourselves to our usual work at the College at a time like the present. I do not feel sure that people who cannot see anything beyond their own little personal interests are justified in ignoring the special claims of the country upon them. People who cultivate art as a mere relaxation or amusement are, for the most part, only serving themselves. If they could serve their country more effectually by joining with others in some work which would be of national service perhaps it would be better for them to give their music a rest for a time. But people who are concerned with larger issues are not justified in giving them up because the times are unfavourable. We are bound to be aware that music must drop into the background for a time. But that is all the more reason why we should be faithful to it.

I hope I have made it clear to you that the College has been working for over thirty years, steadfastly and consistently, at definite objects, and that the effects of those efforts cannot

justly be ignored. As a matter of fact there never was a time when it was more necessary to be faithful to such objects. Music is one of the most effectual ministers of civilisation. And when civilisation is imperilled, as it is now, by a fearful reversion to methods of violence and destruction, it behoves those who are concerned with the spiritual constituents of civilisation to maintain their efforts to the utmost. If we were to relax our efforts the set-back to music would be so much the worse. A great deal of what has been effected would be lost again, and there would be another long climb uphill.

It is impossible to guess what will happen when the war is over. Perhaps people may take their arts more seriously. Perhaps they will be so wearied that they will only want the most trivial kinds of music, as many do now. When we see the wisest heads, the men for whose judgement and intelligence we have considerable respect, making prophecies and having them falsified in a few days, we become wary of keeping them company. The best we can do is to try to discern what will be serviceable to do, and do it with all our might. The work the College has been

doing will be needed even more in the future than it has been in the past, and each of us can contribute something towards it. It is always much happier, as well as more profitable, to work together for ends with which we can sympathise than to play for our own hands. It is, moreover, a lower type of being who is only concerned for his own private interests. Even when a man is straining every nerve to get the best out of himself and develop such talents as he has, he will get better results and make a much more enjoyable business of his life if he can see his work in its relation to other people, and can feel that what he is making of himself will minister to their good.

There never was a time when it was more needful to take our art seriously. The College has been a happy place, mainly because so many of its people have taken their work heartily and honestly, and have tried to understand its infinite variety, and discern in what ways it can be of most service to humanity. It is a mere truism to say that the best of anything is that which is most widely serviceable. As long as we aim steadfastly at the best we can concentrate ourselves on our College work

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in war time as in peace time with clear consciences. We have our special way of serving our country, and we shall serve it best by making that service as hearty as we can.

*September 1915.*

AT THE LAST



## ORDER AND DISORDER

I DARESAY you may have noticed that we are constantly being told in speeches and in print that when the war is over the old world, to which we had grown accustomed before it, will have disappeared, and a new order of things will prevail. As some one says, "The old order changeth, yielding place to new." I confess I do not believe it. There are things that are too deeply rooted to be abolished in a few short years, even with such turmoil as we have been going through.

After all, what do people mean by the old order changing? It is quite possible that they themselves have got caught up in some tangle of folly and frivolity which they have not the strength of mind and will to get out of, and as they are dimly conscious that such a state of affairs is not satisfactory, they hope for a revolution to take the muddle away and make

them sane and wholesome by force. But that is not the way the universe works. The change must be in the men themselves. If they are slaves to their baser animal instincts and their rotten personal pleasures, they are not going to be cured by any amount of bitter warfare, or revolution either. As a matter of fact, such commotions bring out the worst side of the worst people. They are more likely to engender recklessness than sanity. The people who are fit to lead and behave with decent sense are submerged by the crazy ravings of people in hysterics, and the wild scrambling of those who want to drown care or thought in any kind of dissipation.

Think of the thousands whose highest aim in life is to show off their vulgar clothes, or to get tasty foods, or to be tickled with the vapid trash and suggestive ineptitudes of music halls and cinemas. All their delights are at the expense of more sensible people. Those whose only conception of life is to fill it full of incoherent pleasures will want them all the more when the tension of these distracting days is over. The men who have borne the burden and heat of the day will want to have what they call "a good time";



and as the general idea of a good time is the gratification of least reputable impulses, it is hardly likely that at such a moment they will become sane and serious. The fighting man is splendid when he is fighting, but it would be superfluous to expect him to be a thinking man too. There are a noble few who keep the steadfast beacons in view, and whose minds are not extinguished by the horrors they have to endure, but with the majority of those whose business is fighting the great questions which concern humanity most urgently hardly exist. And those will be the things which will call for all our best energies when we are trying to settle down again.

It is very likely that we shall have a lot of wrangling and plenty of impracticable proposals. Perhaps there will be attempts to take property away from people who had plenty and give it to those who had none to speak of. But transferring property to people who never had any idea of using it to any advantage either to themselves or any one else is not likely suddenly to inspire them with serviceable ideals. We are, unfortunately, too painfully conscious that many of the over-rich

have behaved in recent years with repulsive selfishness and levity and blindness, and have set a bad example to their less materially fortunate fellows. But not all of them by any means. The way many of them have behaved in the times that have tested their mettle has been magnificent. They had lacked opportunity of doing anything serviceable before, but when the opportunity came they proved astonishingly worthy of it. We are naturally dazzled by the magnificent grit and courage and devotion of our fighting men. They, indeed, have renewed our pride and confidence in the dear old country. But what has been done at home by devoted civilians, whom we do not hear so much about, is quite as much a thing to be proud of.

It is splendid to see on all sides the people who are giving themselves heart and soul to the service of the nation without thought for their petty selves or getting anything out of it. If the war has done anything to mend the old pitiful disorder, it is by giving such splendid human nature opportunities for showing that noble qualities are really plentiful, and to what good use they can be put.

But humanity has a very mixed outfit, and

most of us are capable of being idiots at times. You will remember the familiar saying that "people who do not make mistakes do not make anything." You cannot have personal initiative without risk of making mistakes; and you cannot get things done without personal initiative. One has to put up with the liability of personal initiative to induce a man to behave like an idiot, because one cannot get on without it. One forgives the mistakes for the sake of the keenness and pluck and independence which are such valuable qualities.

But then again, on the other hand, there are a terrible lot of mistakes which are not the result of initiative or independence but very much the reverse. They are rather the effect of lack of it, and of that unfortunate herding instinct of the race which makes people take their cues from one another, and lean up against one another, and do stupid things because so many other stupid people do them—and that makes us feel depressed. For the world is, as a rule, quite superfluously occupied with exciting itself over follies and mistakes, and about incapable people who manage to push themselves into responsible

positions for which they are quite unfit, and serenely smiling idiots who sun themselves in an imagined noontide of their own importance.

It is so much easier to see things that are wrongs than things that are right. Real devoted work does not obtrude itself. It is too much in accordance with the natural and profitable growth of the universe to strike the attention ; it is too happy in doing what it can do and is fit to do to trouble about recognition or personal profit. But, in fact, there is a strange usefulness in our attention being so much more arrested by rotten things than sound ones. Bad smells are extremely useful when they call our attention to things which have gone wrong and have to be put right. The people who correspond to them in actual life deserve to be recognised as useful when they call so much attention to themselves, because it gives opportunities to realise in time what is wrong with them. The essential curse of the days we have been living in was that so many people set their trivial amusements above their natural and serviceable activities.

It was the weak surrender to the desire for trivial personal pleasures which insidiously

took possession of the well-to-do classes, and so contaminated and weakened the nation that many of us thought we should not be able to stand up to a big war like this. Fortunately, the follies and trivialities of gay society, which occupy more space in the newspapers than any other subject, were mainly superficial. But there again the excessive attention which was bestowed upon them was useful, because it misled the Prussians, who were watching and waiting for the opportunity for a predatory onslaught on the rest of the world. And they started too soon on their campaign of might against right and reason, thinking all our grit was gone and that we were utterly demoralised by our indulgence in mere pleasure and had become incapable of strenuous persistence in effort. The pictures afforded by the newspapers of the gross levities of the over-wealthy misled them. The fact that newspapers are not concerned with quiet efforts to do good, and that the big pleasure-seeking multitude do not care to know anything about them, had compensations. If the Prussians had waited a generation or so till the poison had done its work more completely, they might have had a better chance of success.

Some of the thousands, who think the aim of life is not to do something worth doing but to indulge all their rottenest impulses every moment they can, have learnt better ; but we have not to go far to see plenty who are unconverted. There are an extraordinary number of people who still think mere dissipation is the principal aim of existence. It is because there have become such a lot of them that it takes so long to get a little sense into them. To make any great change in the world, or even in a small bit of it like England, changes have to be made in so many of the people who inhabit it ; and that takes time and patience.

By this time people might have learnt that trying to cure evils in spasms is useless. They can only be cured by men making up their minds what it is necessary and serviceable to do and sticking to it. And it is one of the things they might have learnt from this war : that it takes a long time to do a big job. Even some of the stupidest people are compelled to learn from the prolonged anguish of such a struggle. You will remember how half-witted people about three years ago raved about smashing Germany and exterminating its inhabitants. They had not even looked at

their maps and considered the vast extent of it, or the vast numbers of huge cities it contains ; nor how many men you would have to kill a day to dispose of a million in a year ! Such people were too much occupied with their ardent pursuit of trivial personal pleasures ever to exert their minds enough to grapple with big facts. And in spite of all we have gone through there are a great many—too many—of such people left still. One can only hope that a big cataclysm will reduce their numbers : it cannot do anything more.

It seems strange to us that people should go on in their paltry self-indulgences when men are suffering and dying for them, as they are for the rest of the community, daily. But, unfortunately, the facts glare upon us ! And that is a proof of the continuity of things. Both evil and good go on. The former can only be eliminated, as the latter can only be built up, by patience and steadfastness. So when people make big assertions about world changes which are to result from certain rather astonishing events, we may well ask them to discriminate. If the continuity of things was really to be broken we should merely plunge into chaos. We want to hold fast to the

good with all our might ; and by all means take such opportunities as offer to get rid of folly and levity and selfishness and all the plague of things which produce disorder and injustice.

If the world had been nothing but disorder and injustice before the war, there would be some excuse for hoping it would be all changed at one fell swoop. But it was not. If it had been, our men at the front would not have made us so proud, and our devoted people at home would not have made such splendid sacrifices or done such noble work. The foundations were sound, though some people had managed to build such ugly and rotten rubbish on the top of them. There must be all sorts of natures, and it is wisest to admit it, and also to make sure that we ourselves do not, through carelessness and self-indulgence, get among the wrong ones.

And we can have no chance of coming to any useful conclusions how to make our lives serviceable and worth living if we do not try to understand the past and how wise people have tried to interpret mankind's experiences and efforts. There is no need to agree with what wise men have said and thought. As a



matter of fact the wise men always disagreed with one another, and they go on doing so still. That is where our personal share and responsibility come in. What we have got to do is to take interest in their views, and try to understand them sufficiently to choose those which are right and just, and not pick and choose only the things that seem to favour our own little personal interests.

It is on the thought and action of the past that our own judgements have to be formed, and if the old world is to pass away and count as nothing, where shall we find the basis of our own judgements and conduct? The glorious literature of our country will still exist, which is one of the greatest heritages a nation can have, and the noblest music will still be available to inspire us ; and the finest qualities of men will still be displayed, as well as a good many of the worst. And it is mainly on the ways in which people maintain the slow but steadfast progress of the past that it depends whether the former increase in numbers and the latter decrease.

It is strange to think of, if we can think of it frankly. Here we have one little allowance of life to each of us ; and we can choose

whether we make a sensible use of it or use it for stupid blundering indulgence of unprofitable selfish impulses. One would think that by this time men would have found out that it was more worth while to try to understand life's opportunities and how to make it really worth living. But the insidious little moments, when primitive instincts pluck at some of us little by little, sap too often the defences of the best intentions, and they go to wreck; and the defeated ones capitulate and spend all the time allowed to them in trying to get away from what is worth doing in order to enjoy mere sensations, and guzzle and be dazzled with shams, and laugh at ineptitudes and make life into a pitiful failure.

It is a peculiarity of those who make music the centre of their lives' activities that they should have been specially connected with the people who are able to make amusement the main object of their lives, because by the mere chance of having more than sufficiency of this world's goods they are not obliged to wrestle with the rubs. The classes which concentrate on amusements think music is a sort of amusement. They keep it in sight as one of their possible resources of pleasure or distraction.

It does to fill up vacant hours ; and the best of them are sometimes saved from perdition through the interest it wakens in them. A musician used to be a sort of rather petted menial servant. When not occupied domestically he was a doubtful but tolerated member of the lower middle classes. The result now is that it is not altogether easy for a musician to come into close and frequent contact with men who are doing the more strenuous work of the world. Such men think musicians can have no minds for anything outside their art, and class them with the pleasure-seekers, and think that they are not to be trusted because they are supposed to supply pleasure for pay, and not to do anything that is really serviceable. It is indeed none too easy to escape being absorbed among the pleasure-seekers when they offer us dazzling baits to be subservient and act as ministers to their wantonness.

But in that respect things are changing. There is the prospect of music becoming again capable of taking a place in the real life of the country. There is a prospect that men of action and responsibility will regard it as a genuine factor in the welfare of the nation,

and not as a mere plaything for the vacant hours of wastrels, or an appanage of fashion.

We shall have to adapt ourselves to a more spacious and responsible position. We shall have to look at our art from outside as well as inside, and develop capacity to take interest in wider spheres of existence. We shall have to learn to judge it from the standard of its value to humanity rather than its pleasure to ourselves. And in so doing we shall ensure the high standard of its quality. The influences which lower and degrade our art come from narrow and personal aims. It is when people have no scope of understanding, and merely seek to gratify their petty personal impulses without looking at the effect they produce upon other people's interests, that demoralisation comes. Some people are finding out through the stress that the war has made how exhilarating it is to be able to be of some service in the world, and how it makes life worth living. The College has been successful in doing some service to the world already for a good many years. But there is no limit, and we can always go on expanding that service by developing more good sense, and finding out how to steer our particular

work so as to escape the passing gusts of fashion and the glimpses of trivial distractions and space it out to wider and wider spheres of helpfulness.

*January 1918.*

## YOUTH AND AGE

I HAVE never had the luck to see many of you together to speak to since a day last term when you did your kindly best to reconcile me to some rather uncomfortable things which it suggested. It is no use blinking the fact that the world is moving on, and that some obvious and usual consequences must ensue ; and it is better to face them than try to behave as if they were not happening.

It is splendid luck for the College that so many of the people who took part in guiding its precarious childhood are still participating in its operations. But though they give proofs of astonishing vigour, after some thirty-five years of constant work in its interests, it is inevitable that some of them must be getting on in years ; and must appear to some young people to be quite uncannily ancient, however much they themselves feel young inside.

It is rather surprising to people who have kept on hammering away all this while to think that when the College began, a great many of you, who now look quite grown up, were not even in the world at all—and of course it was a very different world from what it is now, and, very likely, you have not much idea of what it was like, and the joy of youth is so all-sufficing that you do not much care either whether such times were worth living in or whether they were worth anything at all. But all the same it was a very busy world, then as now, though there was no hideous madness of war to harrow our nerves, or such wildly exciting performances as the singeing of the devil's whiskers at Zeebrugge we had a few days ago! That it was not altogether rotten, bad, and ineffectual is proved by the fact that it got the R.C.M. founded and into working trim, and that those who prepared the way went through the throes of vast exertions to get it done.

It is only fair to ask the young ones who missed the opportunity to take part in such exhilarating efforts because they were born too late, not to think the days before they came on the scene must have been dull and common-

place. I cannot help wishing the younger members of the College could have some idea of the way people worked for it. It was splendid! It would be useful, in these days when indiscriminate repudiation is so much in the air, if young people could realise that the old people were not always old and could tackle new developments and new achievements with all the zest of the youngest in the present. It might help them to understand the older people, and give the old a better chance of understanding them.

The relations of young and old are always a puzzle to every one who thinks. The old ought in the nature of things to understand best because they must have been young themselves, in a sort of way, once upon a time. But in spite of it they most of them do not face facts they ought to know. When they were young they often thought the old people old fogies, slow-coaches, stiff and creaking physically and mentally, wedded to conventions, unenterprising, obstructive and futile, and they rarely take to heart that it is only natural that the young, in the days when they have become old, should have the same feelings towards themselves.



The opportunities of the young to judge of the old ones are quite different—one would think not so favourable. They have the disadvantage of never having been old, so they cannot know what it feels like. It is glorious to be young, when life is full of eagerness, and there is zest for everything that comes—so it is hardly to be expected they should do much patient thinking. It is true that young minds are more receptive than old ones, and they get impressions more quickly; but they have not come across anything like so many various things. They have not had the chance to know a tithe of the various facets of life, and they can only judge by the limited experiences that have come their way. So they often think that the old people, who have seen many sides of life and had a vast lot more experiences, are rather tiresome when they advise them not to do this and that which they want to do and damp the ardour of youthful venturesomeness and exuberance.

In one respect you are very fortunate in the College, for the old people you have to deal with have mostly continued young. They keep on being young because they are always in intimate contact with young people, and

keep their minds alive in intimate relations with them. The old-fashioned pedagogue, such as one used to see and hear a lot about half a century ago, put a sort of brazen barrier between youth that was to be taught and the teacher, which shut out the human relations between them, and quite justified the rebellious attitude of the young people. He did not understand much himself, and was afraid they would find it out. That sort of pedagogue used to be old before he was forty.

Nowadays when people go to work to teach they try to get into sympathy with the humanity of those who have to be taught. They recognise them as their equals in many respects, and try to get into touch with their motives and the springs of their minds, and to see things from their point of view—and this brings youth and age happily together. You will hear old-fashioned people decry such friendly relations, because they suppose youth will lose the respect due to age. But it is no good forcing respect when it is not fairly earned. That was the attitude of those to whom in old days little or no respect was due except on the basis of the birch rod and the scale of punishments rigged up to suppress

infringements of tiresome and arbitrary sins and wickednesses, which for the most part were not sins and wickednesses at all.

Such people had to establish a sort of rule of terror in order to maintain their position ; and the result was that the young spent great part of their time trying to defeat their tyrants, and in mocking at them behind their backs.

I do not think you have any idea how fortunate you are that the world has changed so much in these respects. When people are only drubbed and bullied into behaving themselves it only makes them want all the more to misbehave themselves. There is always the inviting excitement of escaping the punishment, and it does not conduce to honesty or right understanding. Order that is only maintained by force is always precarious. It makes people like disorder.

Fortunately the College came into existence just at the time people were getting wiser about such things, and realised that the best way to get order and good sense is to help those who are wanted to be orderly and sensible to appreciate the advantages of orderliness and good sense. The old idea was that young people were incurably mischievous and rebellious ;

the modern idea is that they are quite as capable of judging of what is sensible as old people if they are appealed to in the right way.

No doubt young people are more prone to mischief and adventure than the old. They have got full measure of the zest of life and are keen for any new experience that will thrill them. The world would not get on very well if they were not. It is mainly through their spirit and ardour that it keeps on moving ahead. The inspirations which come to young people keep the world alive and prevent it lapsing into humdrum acceptance of conventional complacency. A world that contained nothing but old people would be very dull and monotonous. There would not be much spring or variety in it. It would mostly be regular routine, and each day would be parcelled out into its hourly duties and occupations, with little chance to make experiments or to do anything original or daring.

When old people are enterprising and adventurous it is because they got into some streak of adventure or speculative interest when they were young and have kept on in the same spirit ever since. There are not many old people who could start a new line and face

a life of changed energies. Their mental muscles have got into the way of doing the same things over and over again and will not adapt themselves to new ways. And then they have had the opportunity to know a great deal more than when they were young, and that has the tendency to make them cautious.

But the blessed young are supple and fresh. Their minds are not too much burdened by experiences. They love the stir and bustle of life which is still inviting and unexplored.

So in reality it is an enormous advantage to combine the respective qualities of youth and age. They can both learn from each other, and the great change which has fortunately come about in their relations is of the greatest advantage to the world in general. One might say that their respective spheres of usefulness are marked out for them. The young have the delightful privilege of pushing the old along and not letting them get into humdrum ways; and the old have an equally delightful privilege of helping the young not to make too many mistakes, or tumble over obstacles which they have not, in their eagerness, foreseen.

Life is a very complicated affair, and it

cannot always move ahead as fast as the young think it ought to do ; and sometimes it might move faster than the old think safe. So it is as well that both parties should be patient with one another and try to see if there is any sense of the other party's apparent misconceptions.

The world gets on best by different people trying to understand each other ; not by banning certain things as out of the range of discussion, and refusing to listen and think. On the whole I think that in these days the old are more inclined to listen to the young and weigh their eager speculations than the young to the old. I am not sure that it is not a good sign. For nothing could be more unprofitable than general respectable conformity to a local standard. Even when initiative goes wild it has life in it, whereas a complacent conformity even with the established tone of a place like the College is tending towards somnolence.

The acceptance of danger as inevitable is one of the most helpful conditions of life. It makes life much more worth living even in the " feel of it." There cannot be any initiative without some risks. Perhaps that is why we must look to the young for it ; for it must

be admitted without reserve that they are much more ready to take risks than the old. One might almost venture to suggest that the finer the youthful spirit the more ready it is to venture everything on the cast. It is there again that the service of the old can come in; and is there anything the best of the old long for more than to be of service to the young? They have always had a burning desire to love and serve them. Even in the old days when they used to whack them indiscriminately they really wanted to serve them by so doing. You remember of course "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth!" We accept the saying because we verify it in general application. Old people try to show their love in other ways now, and perhaps it is therefore not so easily discernible, and where it is not discerned it is easily flouted, and love that is flouted tends to take an unpleasant flavour. It is just there that the young are most liable to take the wrong road. They cannot realise fully that what all the best of men live for is the service of the young, and of those that are to come after—that their lives may be better and more profitable than their own. It is the greatest pre-occupation of all the old who have any

youthful energy left, and the young in their headlong impetuosity often rebuff it, and so miss or even destroy the most admirable relations that can exist between them.

It might all be saved if people could maintain a high sense of courtesy. Courtesy has in recent years been a good deal discounted by the poisonous influences of competitive commercialism. But there is no better token of real fine quality than that same steadfast spirit of courtesy which yields opportunities first to others before taking them oneself—the courtesy that never lacks consideration to a human being—that gives real generous recognition to other people's interests—the courtesy that refrains from flinging the self in the face of every one that comes, and develops the feeling that we are all joined together by the workings of something bigger than ourselves.

There are few things more charming than the tokens of chivalrous courtesy in young people. It becomes more valuable as the world gets older, and in some parts of the world it also grows more scarce. Where it flourishes the relations of young and old are sure to be fruitful, and the various possible mischances are safeguarded. Chivalrous



courtesy is not merely a veneer. It has to come from genuine qualities of nature and attitude of mind. It only flourishes when we give up the futile insistence on ourselves, and recognise that the little insignificant item of our own persons, which is ultimately all we have to show, can only become of consequence by its joining in the ardours and the efforts and the interests of other people. Maybe courtesy would save the older people from too much pre-occupation in their memories; it would distract them if they are not altogether free from aggravating flaws. It might even prolong the period of their energies!

For though there seems to be something of a trifle of selfishness in being absorbed in one's own memories, it seems on the other hand a very useful provision in man's life that when his energies are becoming feeble he should have the opportunity to look back over the record and gladly recall and live again those things which afford contentment and happiness to remember. If the young people have the luck they will some day be old themselves; and then there will be a new basis of valuation of life. They, too, will find out that cheering and beautiful memories are among

the most precious of human possessions, and outweigh all the utmost wealth that can be piled up by millionaires. And they may find out another thing too ; that though, as the old Latin poet said, " The good things we have had even the envious gods cannot take away," there is a disagreeable fact that is not often referred to, that of unpleasant memories even the kindest gods cannot relieve us.

A man's age is happy in proportion to the few things which he can look back to with shame. If he has been greedy, and mean, and self-indulgent, and dishonourable, and cowardly, and crafty, and self-seeking, he is forced to try and forget. Such a man generally spends most of his time in making out the worst of every one, and interpreting all other people's actions in the most unfavourable light in order to cajole his own consciousness of failure ; and persuade himself that other people are as abject muddlers as he is.

I sometimes think one of the reasons why people got drunk so much a hundred years ago was that they had such a lot of beastliness on their consciences.

But if a man has lived generously and frankly and kindly it helps his old age to be

genial and kindly and happy. Even if adverse fates have dealt cruelly with him he has such compensations as help him to smile still with the sense that he cannot be defeated—and it does not matter much if the time is short before him, when the good long time behind him is a constant pleasure and content to look back to.

So when you begin to think about it, it will be helpful to remember that youth must soon be gone, and to try to provide for the possibility of old age, however keen and eager you may be. Remember that it will be most worth getting to if your memories are plentifully worth cherishing, and never bring you anything but a quiet sense of contentment in having done your best to live a life that was worth recalling ; then, the fight won by the better self against the worse self, you will have contrived to help the world to be a better place to live in before it is time to take leave of it.

*April 1918.*



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